EXPLORERS

by

Eric Luke

FINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT

September 10, 1984

1 MAIN TITLE 1

All is dark.

We hear the SOUNDS of WAR OF THE WORLDS, the George Pal film: explosions, people shouting, and the distinctive sound of the Martian ray guns.

The TITLE "EXPLORERS" FADES IN, FADES OUT.

FADE IN:

2 INT. BEN'S ROOM - TV SCREEN 2

On a TV screen we see a scene from the end of WAR OF THE WORLDS, with the Martian machines destroying Los Angeles, Gene Barry running for his life as the city burns around him.

We start a slow DOLLY back as MRS. CRANDALL ENTERS FRAME, a silhouette in the darkened room. She shakes her head and sighs, looking at someone off camera, and turns OFF the TV set.

She walks quietly to the door and leaves.

3 ANGLE ON BEN'S BEDROOM 3

We DOLLY back from the door to reveal several hanging winged dinosaur and flying dragon models floating past us.

We MOVE past SCIENCE FICTION POSTERS on the walls, a LARGE ROBOT model on a desk, and come to rest on BEN CRANDALL, asleep in bed.

Dissonant MUSIC starts to build, with strange unearthly SOUNDS, and we see that Ben's eyes are fluttering, his lips moving as he dreams.

4 EXT. PLAIN - BEN'S DREAM 4

With a BURST OF MUSIC, we are inside Ben's dream.

Dressed in pajamas, he stands on a barren, windswept PLAIN, with JAGGED MOUNTAINS in the distance, and DARK GREEN CLOUDS rolling overhead. The plain is featureless, except for BROAD DISCOLORATIONS that run across it.

He looks down at his feet, takes a breath, and jumps six feet into the air, slowly floating down again.

5 INT. BEN'S BEDROOM 5

Ben breathes deeply in his sleep, enjoying the flying sensation.

6 EXT. PLAIN - BEN'S DREAM 6

He bends his legs and really jumps this time, shooting up into the air, higher and higher. We FLY up with him, and with a MUSIC CRESCENDO, the changing perspective reveals that the discolorations on the plain hundreds of feet below are actually a gigantic DRAWING, a SCHEMATIC for a CIRCUIT BOARD.

Ben turns, treading air for a moment, catching sight of the drawing below.

He frowns, looking at the details of the diagram, and swoops down toward it.

7 INT. BEN'S BEDROOM 7

Ben sits up in bed, half-asleep, blindly fumbles for a pencil and paper by his bedside, and knocks over a glass of water.

Eyes closed, he starts to draw the diagram in the dream.

8 EXT. PLAIN - BEN'S DREAM 8

Back in the air, he concentrates on the diagram.

Suddenly, he DROPS, falling toward the ground, tumbling out of control. He tries to yell, but can't make a sound, the WIND ROARING in his ears.

MUSIC BUILDS to a FINAL CRESCENDO as the ground rushes up to meet us and:

9 INT. BEN'S BEDROOM 9

Ben's eyes fly open, wide awake. He scribbles furiously, trying to remember, writing numbers under certain sections. He presses his hands to his forehead, but simply cannot complete the diagram. One section of it remains BLANK.

He sets the glass upright and wipes up the water with a sweater from the back of a chair.

Taking the paper, he gets out of bed, walks to a shelf and * picks up a high-powered WALKIE-TALKIE. He flips it on, * adjusts the frequency, and presses a home-made addition, a SIGNAL BUTTON.

BEN
(excited)
Hey, wake up.

10 EXT. MULLER HOUSE 10

An old, two-story house sits under the night sky in a suburban neighborhood.

11 INT. WOLFGANG'S BEDROOM 11

* Another walkie-talkie on a shelf BUZZES. We DOLLY back to reveal a room full of old CHEMISTRY SETS, gutted RADIOS, ELECTRONIC GAMES and dismantled HOME COMPUTERS. A SOLDERING GUN sits in the center of a desk, surrounded by piles of TRANSISTORS, RESISTORS and coils of WIRE. *

A small kid with short hair, WOLFGANG MULLER, sleeps in the center of a tangle of sheets and blankets. The BUZZING wakes him.

He has trouble extricating himself from his bed, but * finally puts on a pair of glasses, and answers the walkie- talkie. *

WOLFGANG
It's three o'clock. This better be good.

BEN (V.O.)
I just had this weird dream.

Wolfgang sits down on the bed wearily.

WOLFGANG
So did I. What was yours?

12 INT. BEN'S BEDROOM 12

Ben stands, staring at the diagram. The MUSIC starts again.

BEN
It was so real. I was flying, and I saw this huge drawing, like a circuit board or something.

13 INT. WOLFGANG'S BEDROOM 13

Wolfgang scratches his neck.

WOLFGANG
(frowning)
I dreamed I was at school without any clothes on. I had to hide in the bathroom.

He is very serious, and doesn't see the humor in any of this.

14 INT. BEN'S BEDROOM 14

Ben sits on his bed, excited.

BEN
Anyway, I wrote it down, as much as I could remember, and I wanted you to look at it tomorrow.

WOLFGANG (V.O.)
Sure. Can I go back to sleep now?

BEN
Ten four. Over and out.

WOLFGANG (V.O.)
Over and out.

* Ben turns off the walkie-talkie and lies down again on his bed. *

He looks out the window as a warm breeze blows in.

15 INT. BEN'S KITCHEN - MORNING 15

The kitchen door SLAMS open as Ben runs in and grabs a POP TART from a box on a counter, and his LUNCH.

His mother, MRS. CRANDALL, is loading the dishwasher while his brother, BILL, 17, a handsome, athletic kid with the look of an achiever, leaves by the front door.

BILL
So long, Mom.

Ben runs out the back door, leaving the screen door open.

His mother frowns.

MRS. CRANDALL
Hey, Ben!

16 EXT. BEN'S HOUSE 16

Ben jumps off the back porch and lands by his bicycle as his mother follows him out.

MRS. CRANDALL
Please keep the screen door shut.

Ben puts his books in his bike carrier.

BEN
Sure, Mom.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: 16

MRS. CRANDALL
Don't I get a good morning anymore? Your brother even says goodbye.

Ben runs his bike around the corner of the house, shouting over his shoulder.

BEN
Good morning, Mom!

He's gone. She shakes her head and goes back inside.

17 EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - MORNING 17

Ben slows as he walks past Bill, who is getting into his CAR.

BEN
Hey, Bill, can I have a ride over to Wolfgang's house? It's on the way to school.

BILL
(can't be bothered)
Sorry, kid. I'm giving Andrea a ride. There's a Student-Principal Committee meeting today.

BEN
Yeah, you probably just want to take her to the drive-in.

BILL
(smirks)
Friday night.

Bill turns away as if Ben didn't exist and pulls out of the driveway. Ben looks down at his beat-up old bicycle and KICKS it.

18 EXT. STREET - MORNING 18

Wolfgang walks slowly along the sidewalk on his way to school, having trouble with the pile of TEN BOOKS under his arm.

The morning sun is clear and bright, shining through the trees that line the street in this fairly nice part of town. The leaves are all brown and orange, and the air is chilly with Fall.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: 18

CHILDREN run past Wolfgang or ride bikes on their way to school, roughly brushing past him, ignoring him. There is something clenched and angry about him, as if he is ready for the world to jump on him.

It does. Walking behind him are three BOYS, older and taller, led by STEVE JACKSON, a flunked 15-year-old who is very large for his age.

STEVE
You can always tell a kid's weird when he wears his pants up to his elbows.

KID #1
Hey, Muller, waiting for a flood?

They run past him, slapping the books out of his hand and shoving him. They run off as Ben rides up and sees Wolfgang collecting his books.

BEN
You okay?

WOLFGANG
It's that Cro-Magnon Steve Jackson again.
(getting up and walking towards school)
Some days you're lucky if you just get to school.

EXP 00

Wolfgang turns around, noticing that Ben is no longer with him. Ben has stopped, staring up at a house. Wolfgang follows his gaze.

It is the big white HOUSE on the corner, and Ben is looking up at a second story BEDROOM WINDOW. There is a TREE in front of it, hiding the interior of the room, but as the curtains blow aside for a second, a glimpse of a FIGURE can be seen, brushing her long, golden hair.

BEN
If I could just see inside her room, just once.

WOLFGANG
Give me a break.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: (2) 1ε

BEN
Don't you ever wonder what it's like in there; what she reads, what records she has, what she does after school...

WOLFGANG
(disgusted)
Come on.
(grabs Ben by the arm and drags him)
Don't you ever think about anything worthwhile?

Ben jumps as he remembers the dream, and pulls the drawing out of his pocket, giving it to Wolfgang.

BEN
Here's that diagram from last night.

WOLFGANG
Please, Ben. I don't need this right now.
(looks at it, frowns)
Hmmm. Standard components. *
There's some high-frequency stuff here. I'll use a ground plane on the breadboard... A parallel port; I could use my Apple for a terminal... this power transistor; I think I can get a MOSFET.

BEN
What?

WOLFGANG
(patronizing)
Metal Oxide Semi-conductor Field Effect Transistor.

BEN
Oh.

WOLFGANG
Interesting output stage.
(points at blank area)
What goes here?

BEN
(shrugs)
Search me.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: (3) 18

WOLFGANG
I can put it together without that.
(frowns at Ben)
I didn't know you knew anything about electronics.

BEN
(impressed with himself)
Maybe I do.

WOLFGANG
Well, Einstein said he went into a dream state when he thought up his theories.

BEN
Yeah, that's right.

WOLFGANG
I don't know. This sure reminds me of that time you told me that rock in your yard was a meteor.

BEN
Give me a break. That was when we were kids.

EXP 00

* 19 EXT. CHARLES M. JONES JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL 19 *

They have reached the front of their school.

A KID runs past and pulls at Wolfgang's "fruit loop," the small loop of material on the back of his shirt. It RIPS his shirt down the back.

KID
Fruit loop! Fruit loop!

Wolfgang stops.

WOLFGANG
That's it.
(turns to Ben)
You know, for some strange reason I don't feel like going to school today.
(coughs)
I'm going to stay home and have a cold.

Ben is excited.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: 19

BEN
You think you can make this?

WOLFGANG
(walking back toward his house)
Look out for Jackson!

BEN
(shouts)
Steve Jackson's got elephantitis of the ego!

A group of KIDS standing nearby hear Ben and laugh.

20 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY 20

Ben is sitting in class, as a TEACHER drones on in the background. He stares out the window and absent-mindedly doodles in the margin of his paper.

He looks down at the drawing and sits up suddenly, frowning.

As the DREAM MUSIC starts again, we PULL IN on the sketch. The shapes look vaguely like the components on the schematic from the night before.

Ben closes his eyes. EXP O

* 21 EXT. CHARLES M.JONES JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL 21 *

Ben is punched in the nose, and pushed back onto the ground. It is later in the day, at lunch recess.

As a ring of KIDS shout around them, Ben is getting beat up pretty badly by Steve Jackson.

Steve sits on Ben's chest, holding his hands down.

STEVE
I heard you called me something funny. What's so funny?

BEN
(admitting)
I said you had elephantitis of your ego.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: 21

STEVE
Why can't you talk like everybody else, Crandall? I don't like people calling me stuff when I don't know what it is.

Ben looks around in frustration and sees Lori Swenson standing in the crowd watching. She gives him a sympathetic smile.

BEN
(looks back at Steve)
Elephantitis is when something gets bloated and ugly, like your butt!

Steve can't believe his ears. He hits Ben in the nose, hard.

STEVE
Boy, you don't learn, do you?

He starts flailing at Ben as if he really might hurt him.

Suddenly a shadow falls across them both. Steve looks up. DARREN WOODS has stepped out of the crowd. He is a tough little kid with a torn jean jacket and hair that's too long.

EXP

DARREN
Cut it out, Jackson.

STEVE
Who's going to make me? You?

DARREN
Sure, Elephantitis-Butt.

* He pushes Steve off Ben. Steve and Darren start to square * off, equally matched, when suddenly Steve takes a step * backward, surrounding himself with three of his hulking * FRIENDS, one of whom carries a bicycle chain. *

* STEVE *
* Get him! *

* Darren takes one look at the odds and turns to run as the * four chase him across the schoolyard, leaving Ben to pick * himself up and inspect his bleeding nose. *

22 ANGLE ON DARREN AND STEVE 22

* The four boys are right behind Darren as they zig-zag * across the grass toward the school wings. *

23 EXT. SCHOOL HALL 23

Darren rounds a corner and tries a door, but it's locked; he's trapped. He turns and finds Steve Jackson standing behind him. Steve is a full head taller than he is. Steve smiles.

Darren reaches up and smashes a fire alarm on the wall. A bell starts to ring, and a male TEACHER pokes his head out of a class. He runs over and grabs Darren.

TEACHER
I saw that, Mr. Smart Guy. You just bought yourself a trip to the Vice Principal's office.

DARREN
Yes ma'am.

The Teacher grabs Darren by the arm, and walks him away to the office. Steve looks after him, confused. Darren * turns and shoots a look of triumph back at them. *

24 EXT. SCHOOL - DAY 24

The final BELL of the day RINGS across the empty, silent schoolyard, and kids stream out of the buildings, shouting, running to the bike racks, the older ones walking to the parking lot, and leaving for home.

Ben rides toward us out of the crowd, looking around for someone, and chooses a direction out the gates.

* 25 EXT. STREET - DAY 25 *

Darren is kneeling by the side of the road fixing his MOTORBIKE with a crescent wrench as kids run past him. The motorbike is made up of parts from many different motor vehicles, all fit together into a custom, souped-up mini-motorcycle.

Ben rides up on his bicycle.

BEN
Everything okay?

DARREN
It's this damn starter. I must have rebuilt this thing a hundred times.

BEN
I just wanted to say thanks for today, with Jackson and everything.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 25

DARREN
He tries it again I'll kick his butt. I'll kick all their butts.

Darren hops on his motorbike, starts it, and peels out. Ben watches the departing engine, then looks down at his own bike again, feeling unimpressive. He decides to pursue it anyway, and rides after Darren, shouting.

BEN
Hey, you want to come over to my house? I just got the cassette of "Attack From Outer Space." It's got a good saucer landing at the beginning, and there's a robot that's not too bad --

DARREN
(sarcastic)
Sounds great.

Darren takes off across a vacant lot, roaring up a hill and jumping his bike across an open trench. Ben pursues him, taking the safe way around, but impressed with Darren's stuntwork.

25A OMITTED 25A

25B EXT. STREET NEAR DARREN'S HOUSE 25B

They skid out onto the street next to Darren's house, which is one of a line of run-down pink houses with overgrown front yards and battered cars in the driveways. Darren is getting more uptight as they near his home, obviously a little embarrassed about where he lives.

DARREN
(continuing)
Look, why don't you just take off, okay? I did you a favor, but I didn't know you were going to bug me about it for the rest of my life.

He stops as he sees a car in his driveway.

DARREN
(continuing)
Oh, no, my Dad's home.

25B CONTINUED: 25B

There is the sound of SHOUTING and BREAKING GLASS from inside the house.

DARREN
(continuing)
I guess he didn't get that job.

BEN
What does he do?

DARREN
Bus driver.

A WOMAN'S VOICE yells back.

BEN
Is that your mom?

DARREN
No. That's my Dad's girl friend. She's okay.

BEN
Hey, do you want to come over to my house?

DARREN
Yeah, maybe I could call from there.

BEN
Let's take the creek.

26 EXT. CREEK 26

Darren leaves his motorbike in his yard, and he and Ben cut across the back yard and down into an overgrown creek that runs along the backs of a lot of the houses in town. Ben walks his bike along the creek bed.

BEN
Your folks fight a lot?

DARREN
My mom died when I was a kid. My dad's okay. He just isn't very lucky. He always breaks things or loses them.
(playing tough)
Anyway, he taught me how to run. Can't catch me anymore.

Ben is quiet, not knowing what to say.

26 CONTINUED: 26

DARREN
(continuing)
Your mom and dad still together?

BEN
Yeah. I guess they get along okay. They just talk about the stupidest junk all the time.

27 EXT. CREEK - MULLER HOUSE 27

They stop in back of a two-story, older house, just visible over a back fence.

BEN
You want to stop here for a second? My friend Wolfgang --

DARREN
"Wolfgang?"

BEN
It's not his fault. His parents won't let him change it. You'll probably think he's weird anyway.

They scramble up the side of the creek, Ben lugging his bike along with him.

27A EXT. WOLFGANG'S HOUSE 27A

Ben and Darren walk around the side of Wolfgang's house up to the front door. Machines in different stages of repair overflow from the garage into the yard: washing machines, oscilloscopes, radios, TV's.

BEN
He's working on something, pretending he's sick. I want to see how it's going.

DARREN
(surveying the junk)
They got some pretty good parts here.

BEN
That's his dad's. Talk about parents, wait 'til you meet his. They're both research scientists or something. German. Weird.

(CONTINUED)

27A CONTINUED: 27A

DARREN
If I had a name like Wolfgang I think I'd kill myself.

MRS. MULLER answers the door. She wears glasses and her hair is pulled up in a tight bun. She is a kind woman, but she gives the impression that half of her mind is always elsewhere, thinking about more important things.

MRS. MULLER
Benjamin! Come in. And this is...

DARREN
Darren.

MRS. MULLER
Darren. You only have to tell me once. I never forget anything.

She turns away. Ben rolls his eyes at Darren and they enter.

28 INT. MULLER HOUSE 28

The inside of the house is stacked with books. Boxes, bags, tied bundles of books make it difficult to walk through the rooms. FOUR CHILDREN, descending in age from 6 to 2, run through the house, one screaming, two laughing, and the two-year-old just sitting and watching.

MRS. MULLER
Ludwig! Stop that right now!

She leads the boys through the kitchen, where the door to the basement has a large sign: "KEEP OUT: IMPORTANT RESEARCH."

MRS. MULLER
(continuing)
Wolfgang is down in his lab. Just a second I'll ring him.

She presses a button on the homemade intercom put together from stereo parts. Wolfgang's voice sounds, small and tinny.

WOLFGANG (V.O.)
Hello?

MRS. MULLER
Benjamin is here, with his friend Derek.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: 28

Darren looks at Ben, who shrugs.

WOLFGANG (V.O.)
Great. I'll be right up.

MRS. MULLER
Have a seat, boys. Can I offer you anything: some baklava?

DARREN
What?

MRS. MULLER
It's Greek pastry. Here, try some.

Darren looks at it suspiciously.

DARREN
Geek pastry?

BEN
No, Greek. It's pretty good.

They bite into it just as Wolfgang bursts into the room. There is a maniacal gleam in his eye. He remembers his mother and coughs horribly for her benefit.

WOLFGANG
(noticing Darren)
Who're you?

BEN
(old science fiction movie dialogue)
He looks human. But remember, Doctor, the aliens can assume any shape they wish.

DARREN
Darren.

WOLFGANG
Hi.
(turns and starts downstairs)
I finished it. I waited until you got here to turn it on.

Ben starts singing the high-pitched eerie "theramin" sound from 50's science fiction movies as they go down the stairs to the basement.

Darren looks at both of them and frowns. He doesn't know what he's doing here.

29 INT. BASEMENT 29

Wolfgang's basement looks like a small-scale mad scientist's laboratory. The room is crowded with boxes of broken TV sets, old radio tubes, circuit boards, soldering guns, and other tools.

Wires are strung across the room to the power lines coming into the house through the basement.

The walls are crammed with shelves of comic books and science fiction paperbacks.

Ben walks with Wolfgang to a workbench, and Wolfgang starts clearing away components and tools he's been working with.

Darren walks over to a small cage that contains a WHITE MOUSE.

BEN
That's Heinlein. Hello, Heinlein.

The mouse presses a large key in its cage that is hooked to a VOICE SYNTHESIZER.

SYNTHESIZER
(mechanical voice)
Hello.

BEN
Gets it right seventy percent of the time.

SYNTHESIZER
(Heinlein presses one key)
I would like...
(Heinlein presses another key)
... some lettuce.

Ben feeds the mouse lettuce through the bars of the cage.

A CAT jumps onto the table by the cage and stares intently at the mouse. Wolfgang takes the cat and puts it on the floor.

WOLFGANG
Down, Erhart. Cokes are in the fridge.

Erhart the cat still stares up at the mouse, then slinks away, foiled for now.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 29

DARREN
Hey, this is okay.

BEN
Like it? All these comics and books are mine. I read every one of them.

* Darren picks a book off the shelf. It's the Classics Illustrated H.G. Wells' WAR OF THE WORLDS, with a brilliant cover of a Martian tripod. *

DARREN
Weird. I never could get into this. I just couldn't believe it.

BEN
That's crap. Stuff like that could happen any time. You just have to be ready for it.

WOLFGANG
Here it is.

With Ben, we turn to look at the MACHINE for the first time. Amidst the piles of electronic clutter on the workbench, it looks clean and compact.

A small gray BOX has controls on the front of it, including a small TV screen. An APPLE HOME COMPUTER is patched into the back, with two DISK DRIVES attached.

WOLFGANG
(continuing)
That box houses your circuit board, which called for a terminal here, so I used my computer, which only has 64K, but that should be enough to find out what it does, if it does anything at all, which it probably doesn't.

He reaches toward the POWER SWITCH. Darren stares, puzzled.

WOLFGANG
(continuing)
No point in waiting. Ready?

BEN
Sure, I guess.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (2) 29

WOLFGANG
It'll probably just burn out or something.

He flips the switch.

Nothing happens. The screen remains blank.

Ben frowns, disappointed, then LOOKS UP as he hears something. Very faint at first, a high, bell-like SOUND starts to build. It has a beautiful quality, like the rim of a glass being traced by a finger.

Read-outs and displays suddenly start to flash across the screen. In the dim light of the basement, they illuminate the three boys' faces with a glowing, magical quality.

Wolfgang glances over at the DISK DRIVES as they start HUMMING and CLICKING.

BEN
What's happening?

WOLFGANG
(disbelieving)
It's, um... it's programming itself.

As dramatic MUSIC BUILDS, the displays continue to flash across the screen, faster and faster, until they suddenly STOP. A single line of figures remains, the cursor blinking beneath them.

Wolfgang reads the figures, mouth open in disbelief.

WOLFGANG
(continuing)
I don't believe this. It's asking for coordinates on X, Y, and Z axes, to locate a point in space relative to the terminal.
(looks at Ben strangely)
How did you ever dream this?

BEN
(staring at the machine; maybe he is a genius)
I guess I'm just that kind of a guy.

Frowning, Wolfgang types in figures on the terminal.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (3) 29

WOLFGANG
That should put the point right on that shelf over there.

He points to a bookcase across the room.

Accompanied by EERIE MUSIC, there is a small movement in the books on one of the shelves.

WOLFGANG
(continuing; spellbound)
I'll move it to the right.

He types in more instructions, and all the books are slowly pushed to one end of the shelf, until they are squeezed together. Curiously, he taps one key more.

There is a loud BANG! from the machine as it shorts out! All the books fly off the shelf as the bookcase is slammed sideways against the wall!

Smoke rises from the BUZZING MACHINE as it quiets down and all is silent.

BEN
What was that?!

He goes to inspect the books. There is a hole the size of a quarter neatly punched through the center of each one.

WOLFGANG
(slowly amazed)
I have no idea.

DARREN
What was that, some kind of trick?

Ben looks at the shelf. The same hole is punched through the side of it. He pulls it away from the wall.

The hole is punched into the cement retaining wall of the basement. He sticks his finger into it and can't feel the end. A crazy smile starts to spread across his face.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (4) 29

BEN
(getting excited)
This was from my dream?

WOLFGANG
(trying to keep calm)
Listen, we have to swear to secrecy. I don't know what this is, but I don't want anybody to take it away, or tell us what to do with it, because you dreamed it, I built it, and it's our secret.

DARREN
What are you guys talking about? That was a trick, right?

BEN
No! No. We need to swear: cut our fingers and mix the blood.

WOLFGANG
(nervous about the blood)
That blood stuff's for kids. How about just a handshake? We cross the middle fingers, point the thumb straight up and <u>say</u> "Blood."

* Darren backs away. He picks up WAR OF THE WORLDS comic book, which now has a hole in it. *

DARREN
You pull this on every sucker that comes over here.

BEN
No, you've got to believe me. Shake on it!

Mrs. Muller's voice sounds over the intercom.

MRS. MULLER (V.O.)
Benjamin, that was your mother. She's angry with you for not calling, and she wants you home right now.

BEN
Come on, Darren, shake!

DARREN
Forget you.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (5) 29

He turns and goes up the stairs. Ben and Wolfgang look at each other. They shake with the secret oath.

BOTH
Blood.

Wolfgang gestures toward the smoking machine.

WOLFGANG
I have to get it running again anyway. I'll call you tonight.

Ben runs upstairs after Darren.

30 EXT. MULLER HOUSE - AFTERNOON 30

Ben looks both ways down the street, but Darren is gone. He shrugs, and heads toward home.

31 OMITTED 31

32 INT. BEN'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 32

* Ben's family sits around the dinner table as he walks hin. His FATHER is preoccupied thinking about work, while his mother serves a bowl of peas and carrots. His * brother Bill is talking about himself again. *

EXP

BILL
Well, it's official, I talked to some people today, and I think I've got a pretty good shot at Student Body President.

MRS. CRANDALL
* That's great. Congratulations. *
* *

BILL
I'd be the only candidate on the football team, and all that work on the Student-Principal Committee can't do me any harm.

* Ben sits down at the table, and comes up with something that he did today. *

BEN
I got massacred today.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: 32

Mrs. Crandall looks up at him sharply, and seeing that underneath his jacket his shirt is torn and stained from his bloody nose, jumps up to check that he's okay.

MRS. CRANDALL
Oh that Steve Jackson, I could just scream! I have had it with that kid.

She starts to walk angrily to the phone.

BEN
Mom, who are you calling?

MRS. CRANDALL
I don't know: the police, somebody!

She stops, realizing that she doesn't know what she wants to do.

MR. CRANDALL
Now don't panic; it's not that bad.

She sits down again, frustrated. Mr. Crandall is looking at his son with a slight smile, almost pleased.

MR. CRANDALL
(continuing)
You got in a fight, huh?

BILL
(annoyed at the interruption)
So anyway the nominations are tomorrow --

MR. CRANDALL
(to Ben)
How big was he?

Mrs. Crandall watches Mr. Crandall as he takes obvious pleasure in Ben's war story.

MRS. CRANDALL
I don't see any reason to encourage him.

MR. CRANDALL
I'm not encouraging him. I just think it's great that Ben...
(gestures to Ben as opposed to Bill)
... went out and --

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2) 32

MRS. CRANDALL
And got himself beat up?

MR. CRANDALL
No!
(pause)
Ah, what the hell, I used to get into fights all the time when I was a kid.

Mr. Crandall chuckles. Seeing that he's in a good mood, Ben prepares to launch into something.

BEN
Hey, Dad?

MR. CRANDALL
Yeah?

BEN
Did you get a chance to read that thing I gave you this morning?

MR. CRANDALL
No I didn't.

BEN
Well, it's for this thing called Space Camp. It lasts ~~six~~ weeks, and you go to Houston, and they put you through all the weightless training and tests that the astronauts go through, and at the end there's a real simulated flight to another planet, and some kids get to be mission control, and some kids actually get to be the astronauts.

MR. CRANDALL
(pained)
"Another planet"? This is this whole science fiction thing again isn't it? Ben, you have to start in the Air Force if you want to be a real astronaut.

BEN
But I don't want to join the Air Force --

MR. CRANDALL
I think it might be better if you spent a little more time down here on Earth this summer. Weren't you going to paint the garage?

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (3) 32

BEN
But Dad --

MR. CRANDALL
I'm sorry, Ben. End of discussion.

Ben looks down at his plate. Everyone is silent, tense.

Bill deliberately picks up his fork and starts to eat again.

Mrs. Crandall glances at Ben, who is obviously hurt.

33 INT. BEN'S ROOM - NIGHT 33

Ben lies on his bed, the lights out.

He stares at the science fiction posters on the walls, the dragon models hanging from the ceiling.

A KNOCK comes at the door.

MRS. CRANDALL
Ben?

BEN
Yeah, Mom.

The door opens and Mrs. Crandall looks in. The MOONLIGHT is bright enough that she doesn't turn on the light. She sits on the bed next to Ben, who is facing away.

MRS. CRANDALL
I guess you want to go to this space camp pretty bad.

Ben rolls over and looks at her.

BEN
Nothing's more important than exploring the rest of the universe, Mom.

MRS. CRANDALL
Well, I don't know about <u>that</u>.
(looks around at his room)
Where on earth do you get this from? It certainly isn't from your father or me.

BEN
I know.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: 33

She sighs and looks at him.

MRS. CRANDALL
Ben, it's great that you want to learn more about the universe and everything. You're interested in things and we're proud of you...
(smiles at herself)
... and even if I don't know what you're talking about all the time, I do know it's important to go ahead and do what you want to do.
(looks out window)
Sometimes I wish I'd done some things...

EXP 00

BEN
Thanks, Mom. I guess Space Camp's out for now?

MRS. CRANDALL
I guess so.
(gets up and goes to door)
But let's not give up. Sleep tight.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2) 33

BEN
Good night.

She leaves.

Ben looks out the window. With sudden determination, he gets up, walks to his closet, and pulls out his sleeping bag.

* He takes his walkie-talkie, raises the window, and crawls *
* out. *

34 EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 34

Ben climbs a ladder at the side of the house, up to the ROOF.

He unrolls his sleeping bag and crawls in, lying on a slant. He looks up at the night sky.

* A PLANE flies high above, lights blinking. We can see the *
* starry cloud of the MILKY WAY. *

MUSIC BUILDS as we feel the wonder of staring up at the STARS.

* He jumps as his walkie-talkie starts to BUZZ. He picks it *
* up quickly. *

* BEN *
Yeah?

WOLFGANG (V.O.)
* It's working again. *

35 INT. DARREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 35

* Darren lies in bed, unable to sleep, thinking about what *
* happened in the basement. The room is spare, with one * chair and a table. The only thing on the walls is a large poster of Bruce Springsteen.

* The sound of loud SNORING comes from the other room. *
* Darren gets up, pulls on his shirt, and drags himself to *
* the door. *

36 EXT. DARREN'S BACKYARD - NIGHT 36

Darren stumbles across his backyard toward a small, broken-down tool shed at the rear. He opens a lock and enters.

37 INT. DARREN'S WORKROOM 37

Darren switches on an overhead lamp, revealing his secret kingdom. He is surrounded on all sides by old GASOLINE ENGINES, second-hand TOOLS, LATHES, AXLES, buckets of MACHINE PARTS soaking in motor oil, and piles of NUTS and BOLTS.

He picks up an old, coverless PAPERBACK BOOK from a storage box, looks at it for a second, and puts it down on his workbench. He picks up a metal-punching tool the same diameter of the hole he saw punched in the books earlier, puts it on the book, and hits it with a four-pound hammer as hard as he can.

He picks up the book and frowns at it; he hasn't even made it through the first three pages.

* With sudden determination, he puts on his jacket and leaves. *

38 OMITTED 38
* thru thru *
* 40 40 *

* 40A EXT. WOLFGANG'S BACKYARD 40A *

* Ben climbs over Wolfgang's back fence, runs across his *
* yard and knocks quietly on his back door. *

EXT

41 INT. WOLFGANG'S LAB 41

Ben and Wolfgang switch on an overhead light, and sit down in front of the machine, their faces illuminated by the
* instruments. Ben is out of breath and flushed from his *
* midnight run. As the light comes on, Erhart the cat slips *
* down off the bench, where he has been toying with the catch *
* on Heinlein's cage again. Ben is hyper with energy. *

BEN
(excited; out of breath)
So what is it? What is it?

* Wolfgang shushes him, looking upstairs with a wince. *

WOLFGANG
(superior)
Calm down. You can't get emotional if you're going to study anything scientifically.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: 41

WOLFGANG (CONT'D)
(walks around the basement, lecturing)
What we have here, as near as I can tell, is an electrically generated point of force.

BEN
What?

WOLFGANG
By typing in coordinates I can make it move anywhere in three dimensions, even as far as slamming it through a few books and a cement retaining wall.

42 & 43 OMITTED 42 & 43

44 ANGLE ON WORKBENCH 44

Wolfgang switches on the machine, which makes its SOUND again, and types in a few instructions. He looks up at the air in front of the bench, but nothing is visible.

BEN
Why can't we see it?

Wolfgang frowns, then reaches up and turns off the overhead light. With a sting of *EERIE MUSIC*, the outline of a tiny BUBBLE is revealed, hanging stationary. It gives off a slight glow, which illuminates their faces as they stare at it, mouths open, as if they were seeing something from another world.

BOTH BOYS
God.

WOLFGANG
(catching himself; trying to sound like an objective scientist)
I'm going to reference it to this grid I did of the room on my graphics program.

A simple, overhead line drawing of the room appears on the screen. He types more data in, and a small "X" appears in one area.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: 44

BEN
Make it fly.

Wolfgang types at the controls, and the bubble floats in a straight line across the room.

* 44A EXT. WOLFGANG'S HOUSE - NIGHT 44A *

* Darren arrives outside; the weird, shifting illumination *
* coming from the basement window makes him look in. *

* 44B INT. WOLFGANG'S BASEMENT 44B *

Wolfgang hits another button, and the bubble changes its size, growing slightly larger. He hands Ben a HAMMER.

WOLFGANG
Hit it with this. You're stronger than I am.

Ben tries.

(CONTINUED)

EXP 00

44B CONTINUED: 44B

It is like hitting a brick wall. He hurts his finger and the ball emits a small SPARK of energy. It doesn't move. The boys stare at each other, speechless with wonder at what they've created.

Suddenly, they both jump as Heinlein's vocal SYNTHESIZER BLARES.

VOCAL SYNTHESIZER
(Heinlein hits one key)
I would like...
(Heinlein hits another key)
... to come out.

Ben looks at the mouse, and starts to grin.

BEN
Sure, why not?

He takes the mouse out of the cage, and lets it crawl onto the very tip of a broom handle that he holds up near the floating bubble.

WOLFGANG
What are you doing?

BEN
Turn it off.

Wolfgang turns off the force field. Ben raises the mouse up until it is in the space last occupied by the bubble.

BEN
(continuing)
Turn it on.

The bubble blinks on again, and it snaps the tip off the broom just below the mouse's feet. Heinlein is left floating inside the bubble.

Ben and Wolfgang stare at the little mouse hovering in front of their eyes.

(CONTINUED)

* 44B CONTINUED: (3) 44B *

The field punches out through the wall. Outside we hear BRAKES SQUEAL, a DOG BARK, a CRASH. Ben runs to the basement window and has to duck as the field comes blasting back in, breaking the glass.

(CONTINUED)

EXP OC

* 44C EXT. WOLFGANG'S HOUSE 44C *

* Darren is standing next to a tree, staring at a HOLE that goes clean through it. He runs back to the broken basement window and looks in. *

* 44D INT. BASEMENT 44D *

BEN
Turn it off! Turn it off!

WOLFGANG
I'm trying!

Wolfgang presses a sequence of buttons, and the machine turns off, just as the bubble executes a few final acts of major destruction and brings a table and bookshelf crashing down in a heap.

BEN
Heinlein!

He runs over and pulls away some debris to find the mouse lying on its back, unconscious.

WOLFGANG
We killed him! We killed Heinlein!

The mouse stirs and looks around groggily.

BEN
(relieved)
He's okay.

He picks up Heinlein and puts him tenderly back in his cage, where the mouse dazedly presses one key again and again.

VOCAL SYNTHESIZER
Hello... Hello... Hello...

Wolfgang and Ben stare at the shambles around them. It looks as if a war has hit the room. Darren speaks from the window and they both jump.

DARREN
(impressed)
You guys weren't kidding.

There is a CREAK from upstairs.

WOLFGANG
Oh great, that's my Mom. God, I never get to have any fun!

MRS. MULLER (O.S.)
Wolfgang, what is all that noise? I'm coming down!

44D CONTINUED: 44D

WOLFGANG
Don't come down! I'll be up right away!
(whispers)
Wait till I'm gone and sneak out the back.

Wolfgang leaves. His mother yells from upstairs.

MRS. MULLER (O.S.)
What in God's name was going on down there?

WOLFGANG (O.S.)
(fading)
I was trying to determine the relationship between how large an object is and how much sound it makes when it strikes the floor...

Ben taps the machine thoughtfully.

DARREN
What are you going to do with it now?

Ben looks at him; it's a good question

EXP

45 thru 49B OMITTED 45 thru 49B

50 EXT. HILL - AFTERNOON 50

With a BLAST of adventurous MUSIC, the three run through a field to the top of a hill overlooking the town. Darren, the strongest, is carrying the Traegheitslosigkeit.

Ben stops to catch his breath and looks around. The air is chill, and the sky is filled with CLOUDS, painted with mysterious shadows by the low-lying sun. At the bottom of the hill, Lori Swenson's house is visible, white and pristine.

Darren sets the machine down on an old TREE STUMP in the tall grass, and Wolfgang takes out a POWER SOURCE that he attaches it to, several TOOLS, a couple of WALKIE-TALKIES. He types at the computer.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: 50

WOLFGANG
(to Ben)
I'm making a rough sketch of the terrain in graphics mode for referencing.
(looks around)
I'll look for something we can experiment with.
(as if to a child)
Don't touch this!

Wolfgang walks away and Ben makes a face at him. He turns to Darren.

BEN
(indicating Wolfgang)
Mr. Professor. It's my dream, I can touch it if I want.

DARREN
Come on, don't mess with it.

But Ben touches the keyboard. The screen shows a circular display floating over the rough sketch of the landscape.

BEN
That's where it'll be when it comes on.

DARREN
Can you make it bigger?

BEN
(showing off, but has no idea what he's doing)
Sure.

He presses a few buttons and the display on the screen enlarges. He's surprised, pleased with himself.

DARREN
How do you make it come on?

BEN
Like this.

He presses a switch.

With a CRACK!, the field blinks on around Wolfgang. As he floats, his feet rotate up toward us, revealing that the soles of his sneakers have been cut off by the field; they still sit on the ground underneath him.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (2) 50

Wolfgang begins to shout furiously, but we can't hear him through the field. He presses against it, and we see his hands flattening against thin air.

DARREN
God, I didn't know it could get that big!

BEN
(awed)
Me neither.
(scared)
I could have cut off his toe or something.

DARREN
Turn it off, man. Get him out.

BEN
Uh, okay.

Ben looks doubtfully at the keys, reaches out and presses one.

Wolfang takes off like a SHOT, moving through the grass at top speed. As he moves, he unceremoniously spins around until he is UPSIDE DOWN.

51 EXT. FIELD - WOLFGANG'S POV 51

We look ahead with Wolfgang as the ground and grass WHIP by inches beneath his head, the force field BANGING large STONES and old LOGS out of the way. He SPEEDS UP to sixty miles an hour.

52 EXT. HILL - ANGLE ON BEN AND DARREN 52

DARREN
He's going too fast.

BEN
(*hyper; trying to* make sense out of the controls)
Okay, okay, okay!

Ben is still awkward with the controls, and when he tentatively presses one key, Wolfgang takes a SHARP CURVE and SHOOTS down into the ground.

53 INT. EARTH - WOLFGANG'S POV 53

Underneath the ground, we look ahead past Wolfgang at the earth being BLASTED out of the way in front of him, until the light from the tunnel left behind him fades into darkness.

54 EXT. HILL - ANGLE ON BEN AND DARREN 54

* Above ground everything is still, except for a distant * RUMBLING coming from beneath their feet. *

DARREN
Where is he?

BEN
(wringing his hands over the machine)
I'm trying to bring him up!
* (distraught) *
* This is like "Journey to the * Center of the Earth" or * something! *

DARREN
* Will you get real?! He's on his * way to China! *

Ben tentatively presses a series of keys, and they look around. Nothing happens. They look at each other in dread.

Suddenly the ground humps up and EXPLODES right next to them.

Ben pulls the power cord out of the machine and there is a SNAP! as it turns off. Ben and Darren look around when nobody lands. Then Ben looks up and points.

BEN
There he is!

Wolfgang is hanging from the top branches of a tree. He is completely helpless with laughter. For the first time we see Wolfgang out of control, unguarded; it is a sort of revelation for him. Ben starts to laugh, too, more out of relief.

BEN
(continuing)
Are you okay? What was it like? What was it like?

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: 54

WOLFGANG
(dropping from tree)
I... I... was having trouble breathing; it's airtight, that's why Heinlein passed out, but it was so weird... I COULDN'T FEEL MYSELF SPEED UP OR SLOW DOWN.

He grabs Ben by the shirt.

WOLFGANG
(continuing)
Do you realize what this means?

Magical MUSIC begins to build.

BEN
You say it.

WOLFGANG
Traegheitslosigkeit.

Of all the things Ben might have been expecting, this wasn't one of them.

(CONTINUED)

EXP 00

54 CONTINUED: (2) 54

BEN
What?

DARREN
Troglodytes?

WOLFGANG
"Tray-kites-low-zich-kite."
That's German for "No inertia."

Ben is speechless.

BEN
"No...

WOLFGANG
... Inertia."

Darren isn't listening, thinking along practical lines.

DARREN
If we had something to sit in, all three of us could fly around in this thing.

A slow grin spreads across his face.

DARREN
(continuing)
We could look in the top of the girl's gym.

Wolfgang gives him a disgusted look, but Darren's mind is racing, thinking about building the flying structure. We can see the plans forming in his head.

DARREN
(continuing; excited)
It'd have to be on supports so the field wouldn't break pieces of it off every time we turned it on, and of course we'd need to breathe in there.

WOLFGANG
My Dad's got a scuba tank.

DARREN
If we hook up three masks that's like fifteen minutes of air each.

Ben has been staring down at the bottom of the hill. His face lights up.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (3) 54

BEN
I've got it!

They both glance at him, startled. Wolfgang follows his gaze and sees Lori's house.

WOLFGANG
Oh no.

55 EXT. LORI SWENSON'S HOUSE - EVENING 55

Crouching in mid-air, Ben floats up through the branches of the tree outside Lori's window, speaking into one of the walkie-talkies. We can't hear him; he is obviously inside the field.

56 EXT. STREET 56

Ben's voice comes out of the walkie-talkie in Darren's hand as Wolfgang manipulates the controls.

BEN (V.O.)
A little more to the right... okay that's it, I can almost see in.

DARREN
(to Wolfgang)
She won't be undressing this early.

WOLFGANG
(gives him another disgusted look)
He just wants to see what her room looks like.

BEN (V.O.)
Oh my God, there she is.

57 EXT. LORI'S WINDOW 57

Over Ben's shoulder, we see Lori at her table, talking on the phone, eating some dessert. Ben whispers into the walkie-talkie.

BEN
(rapturously)
She's talking on the phone. And she's eating some... it looks like Boston cream pie.

58 EXT. STREET 58

Wolfgang and Darren look at each other as Ben describes her bedroom. *

BEN (V.O.)
She's got some stuffed animals on her bed, and those look like Duran Duran records by her stereo.

DARREN
(to Wolfgang) *
Boy, he's got it bad.

WOLFGANG *
(agreeing)
Idiotic.

59 EXT. LORI'S WINDOW 59

Lori hangs up the phone, takes out a small brown book and starts to write in it. Ben gasps.

BEN
(into walkie-talkie)
She's writing in her diary! Get me closer!

The field takes a sudden lunge forward, breaking a branch off the tree and bumping into her window.

BEN
(continuing)
Turn it off! Turn it off!

60 EXT. STREET 60

Wolfgang rips the power wires out of the Traegheitslosigkeit, * and the machine snaps off.

61 EXT. LORI'S WINDOW 61

Just before Lori looks up, Ben suddenly falls out of the air, landing in some bushes below. She goes to her window and opens it.

LORI
Who is that?
(sees him)
Is that you, Ben Crandall?

BEN
Yeah, I guess so.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: 61

LORI
What are you doing down there?

BEN
Well, I saw a cat in your tree, and I thought I'd get him down.

LORI
Did you?

BEN
Uh, yeah.

LORI
Oh, by the way, I'm glad you're here; I won't have to mail it to you. I'm having a party on Saturday for our class, so you're invited.

BEN
I am?

LORI
Sure, and you can tell Wolfgang to come, too.

BEN
Oh, really? Okay, great, great.
(walking away)
I'll see you there.

LORI
Okay, Ben. Good night.

Ben looks back and trips over the fallen branch.

62 EXT. STREET 62

Ben, Wolfgang, and Darren walk toward Wolfgang's house. The streets are dark and becoming spooky. Darren is carrying the Traegheitslosigkeit again.

BEN
I think she <u>really</u> likes me.

WOLFGANG
Don't get too excited. She invited me too, you know.

BEN
Yeah, but that's just because she's inviting the whole class.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: 62

Darren looks up. He's been thinking about the machine.

DARREN
Once we get this built, how fast will it go?

WOLFGANG
(getting anxious)
Imagine being in a car, and accelerating from zero to ninety in less than a second. Dead meat. From broken neck or spine or just being squished. Inside this field you have no inertia, no resistance to acceleration. You can start, speed up, stop without slowing down, and basically you won't get squished.

DARREN
(didn't get an answer)
How fast?

He pulls at some wires and holds up the power source.

It is a TRANSISTOR RADIO BATTERY

Darren looks at the other two with a gleam in his eye as he realizes how fast they might be able to travel.

EXP

63 INT. GARAGE - NIGHT 63

With a loud CREAK, Wolfgang opens his garage door and Darren shines a flashlight in. It is crammed from floor to ceiling with old machines, furniture, sheet metal, wood, shopping carts, etc.

The boys enter and start to explore.

BEN
Here's an old car seat over here. And some washing machine doors: portholes!

As they sort through the junk, Wolfgang looks at Darren.

WOLFGANG
You know what inertia is?

Darren looks up defensively, as if accused of being stupid.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: 63

DARREN
So what if I don't?

Wolfgang is startled by his reaction.

WOLFGANG
As you may or may not know, mass is the measure of a body's resistance to acceleration. No mass means no inertia.

64 thru 69 64 thru 69

70 EXT. JUNKYARD - NIGHT 70

Wolfgang plays his flashlight over a sign that reads: "ROGER'S JUNKYARD - If You Can Find It, I Can Sell It." Beyond the chain link fence lies a fantastic mass of shadows and silhouettes of old machines.

WOLFGANG
Who's Roger?

DARREN
This old guy. He won't notice if we borrow anything.

A ferocious-looking guard DOG runs up and leaps against the fence, SNARLING. Ben and Wolfgang trip backwards, falling over in surprise.

DARREN
(continuing)
That's Bozo. I always come over here at night to get parts, so I kept bringing things to make friends with him: bones, meat. Nothing worked. I finally found out what he likes. Hey, Bozo.

Darren takes a stick of gum out of his pocket and gives it to the dog, who takes it and sits, staring at them, chewing stupidly.

BEN
Doesn't he swallow it?

70 CONTINUED: 70

DARREN
Nah, Bozo's pretty weird.

Darren slips through a crack between two fence poles.

71 EXT. JUNKYARD 71

The three walk through the junkyard. Darren showing it off like a private kingdom. They enter an area that is made up of junked amusement park rides, too old and dangerous to be used any more.

DARREN
All the old rides are over there; there's a bunch of rats that live in them.

WOLFGANG
Let's skip those.

DARREN
Here's the stuff I thought we could use.

With portentous MUSIC, we DOLLY THROUGH the junk to reveal, sitting on top of a metal scrap heap, silhouetted against the sky: a 1950's style bullet-shaped compartment from an old "Tilt-A-Whirl" ride. It is rust-eaten, but some of the bright reds, blues, and silvers of the original colors still show through.

Ben is speechless.

BEN
It's... beautiful.

72 EXT. SHIP - NIGHT 72

A DOOR BANGS open and the three look inside the compartment. It is in worse shape than the outside, the seats torn, the walls ripped up, but it is six feet in diameter, a perfect size for them, and the structure looks solid.

BEN
This is perfect.

WOLFGANG
It stinks in here. How do we get it home?

DARREN
Roll it.

73 EXT. CARNIVAL JUNKYARD FENCE - NIGHT 73

The ship rolls out of the junk piles and smashes into the front fence, the boys running behind it.

The dog sits watching them, chewing its gum. Darren swings open the front gate.

WOLFGANG
This is going to be tricky. We'll just have to be real quiet.

74 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 74

The ship rolls down the street, CRASHING and BANGING against the pavement as they run behind it, pushing it.

Light after light blinks on in the darkened houses as they pass.

Ben points to the houses, but Darren shrugs.

DARREN
I just hope nobody calls the police.

WOLFGANG
Watch out!

The street slopes downward, and the ship rolls ahead of them, out of control.

It smashes a row of empty trash cans, and they all start rolling after the ship, like a herd of smaller creatures following a mother. The noise is deafening.

75 EXT. INTERSECTION - NIGHT 75

A patrol car drives slowly through an empty intersection.

76 INT. PATROL CAR - TRAVELLING 76

Two COPS drink coffee.

Behind them, the ship rolls across the intersection, followed by the herd of trash cans, and then the three boys running.

One Cop sees it out of the corner of his eye in the rearview mirror.

COP #2
What the hell was that?

77 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 77

Wolfgang yells to Darren, panicking.

WOLFGANG
That was the police, wasn't it?

DARREN
Big deal.

WOLFGANG
Oh great! I'm going to Juvy before I can even drive.

BEN
There's the creek!

The same creek that runs behind Wolfgang's house crosses underneath the street.

Ben and Darren run through the rolling trash cans, catch up with the ship, and change its course so that it crashes over a waist-high cement wall, flies through the air, and smashes into the creek below.

The boys dive into a hedge of ivy, just as the patrol car turns the corner and drives up the street. It slows as it nears them.

The car comes to a halt, and the Cops stare out the front window, puzzled. All they can see is a street full of trash cans rolling away from them.

78 EXT. CREEK - NIGHT 78

Later that night, back in the creek behind Wolfgang's house, the boys are adding ground supports, washing machine window portholes, and other modifications to the outside of the ship.

Wolfgang crawls inside.

79 INT. SHIP 79

The ship is a little cramped, but good use has been made of the space. Wolfgang has built a support for his Traegheitslosigkeit control panel.

Mattresses have been nailed to the inside in places, with various other pieces of debris used ingeniously for handholds, seats, and headrests.

Darren points out some loose bolts and the three go to work with crescent wrenches and screwdrivers.

80 EXT. CREEK 80

Wolfgang blinks on the colored lights from the amusement park ride on the exterior of the ship, and tries two brilliant white car headlights mounted on poles that can be aimed from inside the ship.

Ben and Darren spray paint the hull of the ship to restore its original bright reds and blues. Ben even stencils a large, silver lightning bolt along the side. It isn't the best paint job in the world, but the ship is beginning to look great.

81 INT. WOLFGANG'S HOUSE - LUDWIG'S ROOM 81

Awakened by a faint flash of light, and distant CRASH, Wolfgang's six-year-old brother, LUDWIG, sits up in bed and looks out the window.

82 EXT. CREEK - NIGHT 82

Ludwig sleepily peers over the backyard fence, a jacket pulled on over his pajamas. His eyes widen as he sees the ship.

LUDWIG
Hey, what are you guys doing?

The three boys spin around.

WOLFGANG
Sshhhh!
(a loud whisper)
Ludwig, you go back to bed right now.

LUDWIG
But I want to play. Is that a spaceship.

WOLFGANG
No! You're going to get us in trouble!

LUDWIG
I'll tell Mom!

WOLFGANG
And I'll tell her who put Silly Putty in the toaster. Go inside right now!

Reluctantly, Ludwig gets down from the fence, and the boys breathe a sigh of relief.

83 EXT. WOLFGANG'S BACKYARD - NIGHT 83

Ludwig wanders across the backyard toward his room, pouting. Then he sees a large, empty metal trash can. He runs over to it, and with a look back at the creek, sizes it up: *if they won't let him play in their spaceship,* he'll build his own.

He crawls inside.

We hear him start making ROCKET NOISES with his mouth.

84 EXT. CREEK - NIGHT 84

Ben and Darren are dog-tired, sitting together on the cement. Wolfgang crawls down the side of the creek with more baklava and Coke.

DISSOLVE TO:

85 EXT. CREEK - DAWN 85

As the sun rises over the houses, the trio steps back to admire its work. Darren tightens a last bolt and slaps the side of the of the ship affectionately.

The ship isn't finished, but with the sun shining off it, it is very impressive.

TRIUMPHANT MUSIC SOUNDS.

* 85A INT. CLASSROOM 85A *

* Ben and Wolfgang are falling asleep in class, having been *
* up all night. The teacher continues to drone in the *
* b.g. Wolfgang's head CLUNKS down onto his desk. *

86 EXT. CREEK - NIGHT 86

That night, Ben and Darren crawl over the back fence and down into the night.

They have knapsacks, Darren grunting under the weight of his. Ben checks a compass, flashlight, and binoculars in his as he walks.

Wolfgang pokes his head out of the ship.

WOLFGANG
Everything's ready in here. Air tank, harnesses, did you bring the helmets?

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED: 86

BEN
These were all I could find.

He holds up a motorcycle helmet, a bicycle head protector, and a green U.S. Army helmet.

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED: 86

WOLFGANG
(rolling his eyes)
Come on! You expect me to make history wearing something like that? Darren, did you bring the power source, a dry cell or something?

Darren puts down his knapsack and lifts out a car battery.

DARREN
My dad won't need it until tomorrow morning.

WOLFGANG
Just a small one would have done. I don't know what the Traegheitslosigkeit would do with this much voltage.

BEN
Let's find out!

DARREN
Calm down. Here, I swiped some beer so we can name it something.

BEN
Good idea.

Darren twists the top off a bottle of beer and takes a swig, a little too nonchalantly.

He hands it to Ben, who tries to act equally cool, even though it's obviously his first drink; he takes a gulp and passes it on to Wolfgang.

Wolfgang looks around as if he's afraid of getting caught, then upends the bottle for a second. They grin at each other, partners in crime.

Ben climbs up the side of the ship with the bottle and holds it poised over the nose.

BEN
(continuing)
Let's call her the Enterprise.

WOLFGANG
No, no! The Einstein! The Einstein!

DARREN
How about the Thunder Road?

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED: (2) 86

They look at him.

DARREN
(continuing; embarrassed)
It's from a Bruce Springsteen song.

BEN
That's a great name. I christen thee the Thunder Road.

He breaks the bottle over the nose. Wolfgang ducks inside to avoid getting covered with beer.

Darren looks down at the ground one last time, sees a penny, picks it up, and looks at it in the moonlight.

DARREN
Good luck.

He puts it in his pocket and climbs up into the ship.

87 INT. SHIP 87

Ben and Darren crawl in after Wolfgang, shut the hatch, and strap themselves to their seats.

The yellow compressed air tank is bolted to the inside wall, with air hoses attached to three mouthpieces dangling over the seats.

Wolfgang hooks up the Traegheitslosigkeit to the car battery.

WOLFGANG
I'm going to take it very easy at first. Something might go wrong and we could all get killed.

BEN
Stop talking about getting killed all the time. The Troglodyte is working, isn't it?

WOLFGANG
What if the ship falls to pieces?

DARREN
She'll hold. She's a good ship.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: 87

BEN
You never get anything done if you don't try.

WOLFGANG
(sarcastic)
Thanks.

Wolfgang takes a deep breath, sits back, and braces himself.

WOLFGANG
(continuing)
We'll be able to talk briefly after the field is on, but breathe through those air hoses most of the time. We'll use up the oxygen in here pretty fast.

The three look at each other. Once again, they shake hands.

ALL
Blood.

They put on the scuba breathers and helmets, and sit back.

Wolfgang turns on the machine. The screen illuminates the cabin with an eerie, blue GLOW.

WOLFGANG
Field on.

He flips a switch on the console in front of them.

88 EXT. CREEK - NIGHT 88

With a CRACK! the tips are snapped off the ship's fins as the spherical field blinks on around it, a little too close.

89 INT. SHIP 89

The interior of the ship is thrown into utter chaos as the gravity REVERSES, and all the loose marbles, coins, tools and Cheetos start to fly around, bouncing off each other and the boys. The boys are all yelling as Wolfgang struggles to hit the right controls.

Everything suddenly falls to the floor as he hits a button and the gravity returns to normal.

BEN
What was that?

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED: 89

WOLFGANG
(not sure at all)
I think we just went into reverse gravity.

DARREN
"Reverse gravity?"

WOLFGANG
(shrugs; defensive)
I don't know. I got it back to normal, didn't I?

Darren looks at Ben and rolls his eyes skyward: this guy's going to be controlling the ship?

BEN
(looking out window)
Is it on? I can't see it.

WOLFGANG
When it's this big it's less concentrated, less luminescent.

Ben looks out the nearest porthole. The creek stretches away into the night.

WOLFGANG
(continuing; preparing himself)
Since the Troglodyte's inside the field, I'm going to plot our movement relative to an imaginary stationary point.
(looks at them)
In theory this should work.

He shakes his head at how crazy this is and types in some instructions.

90 EXT. CREEK 90

As portentous MUSIC begins to build, the ship slowly, quietly lifts off the ground and floats upwards.

91 INT. SHIP 91

Ben looks out the window at the changing perspective.

Darren notices a loose bolt, reaches over and hand-tightens it.

Wolfgang's eyes are wide in fright, but he is obviously charged with excitement, too.

92 EXT. CITY 92

The ship rises over the backyards and slows to a halt, hanging incongruously thirty feet off the ground, silhouetted against the starry sky.

93 *EXT. NEIGHBOR'S BACKYARD* 93

A DOG on a neighboring back porch looks up at the ship.

With a halo of moonlight, and the glow of the instruments inside, it looks a lot like a UFO.

The dog starts to whine.

It gets up, runs, and jumps against the yard fence, barking at the ship in the air.

94 EXT. BACKYARD 94

In another yard, a smaller DOG wakes up, sees the ship, and starts to howl.

95 EXT. THREE BACKYARDS - AERIAL VIEW 95

From the air we see three more backyards, all with DOGS running in circles, going crazy, BARKING at the ship. It's getting very noisy.

96 INT. SHIP 96

Inside the ship, the force field blocks all outside sound. Darren looks out at the ground.

DARREN
Hey, look at all those dogs.

97 EXT. SHIP 97

We look down past the ship to see that all the backyards visible have barking dogs in them.

House lights start to blink on.

* 97A EXT. HOUSES - SHOTS OF BARKING DOGS 97A *

Various dogs bark in different backyards.

98 INT. SHIP 98

House lights start to blink on. Darren turns to Wolfgang.

DARREN
People are coming out. Get us out of here.

Wolfgang is typing furiously.

WOLFGANG
I'm trying!

He punches a final button.

99 EXT. NEIGHBOR'S BACKYARD 99

The ship moves off sideways, floating across the neighborhood.

A back door opens, and a MAN gives the first dog a whack with a newspaper for his trouble.

100 EXT. STREET 100

The ship floats slowly over the tops of houses and through the trees that line the street. We see down into backyards and through windows.

* 101 OMITTED 101 *
* thru thru *
* 110 110 *

111 EXT. DRIVE-IN - NIGHT 111

The drive-in is half full as the feature, an Italian-made sci-fi thriller with spaceships on strings zooming at each other, reaches its low-budget climax.

NOTE: SCENE FOR DRIVE-IN MOVIE SCREEN TO COME

112 INT. CAR 112

Ben's brother Bill is sitting with ANDREA, his date, eating pizza. He stares knowingly at the lousy special effects.

BILL
(trying to impress)
That's what's known as a "travelling matte."

She's playing hard to get.

ANDREA
How do you know?

Bill sneaks his arm up over the back of the car seat, around her shoulders.

BILL
All these films use 'em. Standard.

113 EXT. DRIVE-IN 113

The Thunder Road lowers down in front of the screen.

114 INT. SHIP 114

Ben sees Bill's car.

BEN
There's my brother! Hey, Bill, this is better than your Chevy any day!

DARREN
(to Wolfgang; exasperated)
Will you get us out of here? You're right in front of the --

WOLFGANG
Give me a break, I've never done this before.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED: 114

He starts to type instructions when the board makes a strange noise we haven't heard before, and instructions start appearing on the screen by themselves.

115 INT. CAR 115

Bill looks at the ship hanging in front of the screen.

BILL
That looks so fake.

The ship suddenly SWOOPS at them, barely missing the car. Bill drops his pizza in his lap and Andrea's coke goes flying.

* 116 OMITTED 116 *

* 116A INT. SHIP 116A *

The Thunder Road swerves the drive-in, heading towards the snack bar in the rear.

117 INT. SHIP 117

Wolfgang is looking down at the console. The strange instructions are printing out even faster.

Ben is looking ahead.

BEN
Watch it!

WOLFGANG
I'm not doing this!

118 & 118A OMITTED 118 & 118A

118B INT. SNACK BAR 118B

Steve Jackson and his friends are hanging out at the snack bar. Steve is distracting the GIRL behind the counter, hassling her while his friends reach around into the candy bars and help themselves.

STEVE
(referring to his change)
Hey, that was a twenty.

(CONTINUED)

118B CONTINUED: 118B

GIRL
(fed up)
It was not.

119 INT. SHIP 119

BEN
Stop it! Stop it!

WOLFGANG
I'm no good under pressure!

Darren lets out an excited rebel YELL that builds to:

120 thru * 121 OMITTED 120 thru 121 *

121A INT. SNACK BAR 121A

STEVE
(to Girl, about change)
Hey, if I'm lying I hope I get hit by a train.

The Thunder Road comes BLASTING through the wall covered by the awning, which we now see is emblazoned with the words: "GET MORE OUT OF LIFE; GO TO THE MOVIES." It demolishes the snack counters, shelves of junk food, and popcorn machines in its path.

Steve and his friends, mouths hanging open, run out of the way of the ship, which is only recognizable as a huge round shape covered with debris and demolished snack food BARRELING towards them.

122 INT. SHIP 122

Wolfgang looks up from the controls.

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED: 122

WOLFGANG
What's going on out there?

Ben and Darren have been trying to see out the portholes, which are covered with the awning.

BEN
I can't see anything.

122A EXT. DRIVE-IN 122A

Steve and his buddies are running away from the snack bar like the cowards they are, as the Thunder Road loses the awning and swoops out and over them, heading away from the drive-in.

123 OMITTED 123
& &
123A 123A

124 INT. SHIP 124

The three look back worriedly at the receding hole they've made in the building. The console blinks back to normal.

DARREN
(to Wolfgang)
Smooth move, Ex-lax.

WOLFGANG
I keep telling you I didn't do that!

DARREN
If you didn't, who did?

BEN
(looking back)
I think they were going to tear it down anyway.

Wolfgang just types at the console, tight-lipped.

DARREN
Hey, let's see what she can do.

WOLFGANG
Calm down. I have to be able to think straight to fly this thing.

A blinding, white LIGHT suddenly shines in through the side of the ship, startling them.

125 EXT. CITY 125

A POLICE HELICOPTER keeps pace alongside, shining a spotlight at them.

126 INT. HELICOPTER 126

Two PILOTS look at the ship in wonder. The older one, CHARLIE CARRUTHERS stares at it, but the younger one, GORDON, seems particularly shaken.

GRODON
What do we do now?

Their spotlight illuminates the exterior of the ship, but they can't see through the windows.

CHARLIE
Order it down.

Charlie picks up his mike, switches on the P.A. SYSTEM.

127 EXT. CITY 127

The helicopter jockeys for position, the SPEAKER blaring.

CHARLIE (O.S.)
Unidentified craft, you are in direct violation of controlled airspace. You must land immediately.

128 INT. SHIP 128

In the ship, everything is silent.

BEN
I think they're saying something.

The three boys turn to look out the window.

129 EXT. CITY 129

With a BLAST OF MUSIC, a hideous face appears at the ship's window. We recognize them as one of the boys with helmet and breather mask on, but in the helicopter spotlight, it looks very alien.

CHARLIE
(startled)
Jesus!

130 INT. SHIP 130

Wolfgang looks at the helicopter.

WOLFGANG
Here's what it means to have no inertia.

131 EXT. CITY 131

With a triumphant BLAST OF MUSIC, the Thunder Road executes three ninety-degree turns, shooting off toward the horizon, leaving the helicopter floundering.

132 INT. SHIP 132

WOLFGANG
You'll notice we're not even cold. The Troglodyte insulates against everything.

He reads the figures on his video screen.

The landscape visible out the portholes is whipping by beneath them.

WOLFGANG
(continuing)
This is ridiculous. We're travelling at ninety miles an hour and I'm not even using one hundredth of our possible power yet.

The figures on the screen verify this.

BEN
Shut up and go!

Peeved, Wolfgang presses a few console keys a little too fast.

133 EXT. SKY 133

MUSIC hits a CRESCENDO as the ship takes off like a bullet, shooting way off over the horizon.

133A INT. *HELICOPTER* 133A

Charlie the helicopter pilot sits as the helicopter cruises, frowning about his close encounter. He picks up his radio mike and adjusts the frequency.

(CONTINUED)

133A CONTINUED: 133A

CHARLIE
(to Gordon)
I'm going to call Frank Martin at the airport.

133B INT. AIRPORT CONTROL TOWER 133B

A bored technician in the local airport tower, FRANK, adjusts his headset as he talks to Charlie.

FRANK
No, no, actually it's pretty quiet around here tonight, Charlie. I --
(a red light blinks on the radar console)
Just a second.

Frank watches the screen as a tiny BLIP skims across it in three seconds. It's gone, and the radar screen is blank again.

He reaches up and BANGS the side of the delicate equipment with his hand.

FRANK
(continuing; into headset)
Hm? Oh nothing. Equipment malfunction.

134 INT. SHIP 134

The three are staring out the window, speechless at how fast they are going.

DARREN
I couldn't even feel us speed up.

WOLFGANG
No inertia. Now I'll gradually increase our speed from here on.

BEN
(breathless)
Where should we go: Australia?

135 OMITTED 135
thru thru
140 140

141 EXT. SKY 141

Suddenly, the Thunder Road takes an unexpected ninety-degree turn and shoots UPWARD towards the SKY.

142 INT. SHIP 142

The Troglodyte is making a strange, TRILLING NOISE, like the first time it went out of control.

BEN
(joking)
Uh, Australia's the other way.

WOLFGANG
(frustrated)
It's doing it again.

The computer readout is filling up with screen after screen of numbers and figures. Wolfgang's fingers aren't touching the keys.

BEN
What is it?

WOLFGANG
(sweating)
I don't know.
(tries to type in something, panicking)
It won't respond to my instructions.

EXP 00

143 EXT. SKY 143

The Thunder Road continues to blast upwards, through clouds.

144 INT. SHIP 144

Darren taps the air tank needle. It is on empty.

DARREN
We're out of air.

BEN
(shouting)
What's it doing?

WOLFGANG
(shouting)
I don't know, okay? It's getting commands from somewhere else!

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED: 144

BEN
(shouting)
From earth? Where?!

WOLFGANG
(screaming)
I don't know!

He starts to type frantically, entering commands. His hands are trembling.

145 EXT. SKY 145

The ship clears the clouds and shoots up into the upper atmosphere. The sky is turning a very dark blue.

146 INT. SHIP 146

All Wolfgang's commands are being answered by the words: "NO ACCESS."

BEN
(shouting)
Where are we going?

WOLFGANG
(crazy)
Shut up! Let me concentrate!

He types in command after command, to which the computer always prints out: "NO ACCESS." Wolfgang punches the keyboard with his fist.

WOLFGANG
(continuing)
Come on! Listen to me!

147 EXT. SKY 147

Looking back from the nose of the ship, we see the ground slipping farther and farther away, land masses becoming apparent as the ship gathers speed.

148 INT. SHIP 148

Darren looks at the other two in panic, realizing.

DARREN
I can't breathe.

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED: 148

Ben notices that he's having trouble breathing too.

BEN
We're suffocating! Do something!

* Wolfgang yells in frustration, sweat pouring down his face. *

* WOLFGANG *
Shut up! Both of you! What can I tell it? What can I tell it?

BEN
Tell it to go backwards!

WOLFGANG
I already tried that! I don't know what to do!

The ship is silent with tension as they realize their approaching doom.

Darren looks up.

DARREN
Try switching something on the circuit board.

* WOLFGANG *
That won't --

DARREN
When a car doesn't work, you don't keep driving it; you look under the hood.

* Wolfgang looks up, impressed. *

* WOLFGANG *
Maybe...

* Wolfgang rips off the cover of the Traegheitslosigkeit, and looks at the small breadboard of circuitry. *

* WOLFGANG *
(continuing)
If I reverse this diode... Hold your ears! It's going to turn off for a second!

He pulls out the small power diode.

With a BLAM!, most of the stale air rushes out of the ship into the thinner atmosphere.

149 EXT. UPPER ATMOSPHERE 149

We see the field for an instant as it blinks off, the ship SKIPS out of its upward rush, its momentum carrying it up close to us, where we see Wolfgang's terrified face through a porthole, then it falls away, starting its dizzying plunge back down.

150 INT. SHIP 150

Wolfgang's hands fight the rush of air to attach the tiny diode connectors back REVERSED from their original position. He makes CONTACT.

151 EXT. UPPER ATMOSPHERE 151

As the field blinks back on, the Thunder Road stops its tumbling motion, and is yanked straight back down towards the Earth as fast as it was leaving it.

152 INT. SHIP 152

Wolfgang collapses against his straps, worn out.

WOLFGANG
Ha! Ha! We tricked it. It thinks it's going in exactly the opposite direction it actually is.

BEN
What about the Earth?

Wolfgang realizes.

WOLFGANG
Uh-oh.

He starts frantically typing, trying to get the ship under control.

153 EXT. SHIP 153

With the ship, we plummet down through the atmosphere, WHIP through the clouds, ROARING straight down to the surface.

* 154 EXT. CITY - NIGHT 154 *

The clouds part as the ship passes through them.

* 155 OMITTED 155 *
* thru thru *
* 158 158 *

159 EXT. CREEK - NIGHT 159

The ship SCREAMS down out of the sky above the creek and comes to a sudden halt three feet off the ground.

159A INT. SHIP 159A

The Troglodyte screen looks normal again, and it's stopped making the weird noise. Wolfgang heaves a sigh of relief and looks out the window.

WOLFGANG
We made it.

He turns off the power.

159B EXT. CREEK 159B

The Thunder Road falls the last three feet, and tips over into its side with a CRASH.

The hatch SLAMS open and the three drag themselves out. They collapse on the ground, totally worn out. A cool breeze blows over them as they gradually simmer down.

BEN
(looking around)
How come we're home?

WOLFGANG
(still catching his breath)
I programmed the EPROM to take us back to our beginning coordinates if the system ever re-booted and no more instructions were typed in on the terminal. Like in case we passed out or died or something.
(to himself)
We made it. We're alive.

Ben starts to chuckle, then laugh.

WOLFGANG
(continuing)
What's so funny?

BEN
That was <u>great</u>! That was incredible! Next time --

(CONTINUED)

159B CONTINUED: 159B

WOLFGANG
Listen, Ben.
(shakey)
We need to be more,uh, scientific about this.
(crawls over to Ben as they're lying on the ground)
I'm not getting in that thing again until we find out where it was getting those numbers, and run tests, hundreds and hundreds of tests --

BEN
You're chicken.

Wolfgang stands up shakily and walks away.

WOLFGANG
I am not! It's just that using a scientific method is a lot smarter than suffocating to death or getting needlessly squished.

Ben looks back at the ship, then at Darren.

BEN
What about you? Do you want to go up again?

Darren looks away.

Ben turns on both of them in frustration.

BEN
(continuing)
But we have our own spaceship! Are you just going to let it sit around and rust?

WOLFGANG
Yes! Until we find out exactly what happened up there!

* Wolfgang walks away. Darren pulls his father's car bat- *
* tery out of the Thunder Road's hatch, and turns back to Ben. *

DARREN
Sorry, man. I want to live.

He leaves.

Ben walks back to the Thunder Road, and stands a second. He KICKS it, and hurts his toe.

DISSOLVE TO:

160 EXT. POLICE STATION - MORNING 160

Gordon gets out of the chopper on the police landing pad, and turns around when Charlie doesn't get out too.

GORDON
Hey, Charlie, where you goin'?

CHARLIE
(shrugs, shouts back)
Take one more look around!

Gordon shrugs and walks across the landing area as the helicopter takes off in back of him.

He picks up a newspaper from a vending machine and reads the headlines: UFO SCARE.

161 EXT. TOWN - AERIAL VIEW - DAY 161

The helicopter SWOOPS out over the town.

162 INT. WOLFGANG'S KITCHEN - MORNING 162

Wolfgang tramps downstairs wearily to his family's breakfast. The other four kids and his father are already sitting around the table as his mother serves them.

One kid shoots a grapefruit seed at a smaller one with his spoon.

MRS. MULLER
Johann! Keep your projectiles to yourself.

Wolfgang sits. His father is reading the newspaper, his glasses pushed up onto his forehead.

MR. MULLER
There has been quite a lot of activity in this town last night. There were numerous UFO sightings, many of them at the drive-in, where police are investigating who is responsible for the destruction of a concession stand

MRS. MULLER
Wolfgang!

(CONTINUED)

162 CONTINUED: 162

Wolfgang looks up, defensive; he didn't do it! *

WOLFGANG
* What?! *

Mrs. Muller checks Wolfgang's face, pinching his cheek.

MRS. MULLER
Your color is not good. You
* should not stay up so late. *

163 EXT. CREEK - AERIAL VIEW 163

The helicopter flies over the town. The pilot shifts position, noticing something.

164 EXT. CREEK - PILOT'S P.O.V. 164

He has spotted the Thunder Road, poorly hidden under a few branches.

165 OMITTED 165
thru thru
168 168

EXP 00

169 EXT. LORI'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON 169

Ben and Wolfgang sit on a bench at Lori's party. They have never been more out of place.

The boys around them wear designer jeans and shirts. The girls are expertly coiffured and made up, much too mature before their time.

Duran Duran is on the stereo. Everyone is talking about the UFO last night.

KID #1
... Everybody saw it. I was talking to Pete last night on the phone and we both looked out our windows...

GIRL #1
... That UFO? It blew up the drive-in...

Steve Jackson brags about his encounter. One of his cronies scoops up twenty hors d'oeuvres off a passing tray as the girl carrying the plate glares at him.

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED: 169

GIRL
God, for someone who wasn't even invited --

Steve takes no notice.

STEVE
(about the UFO)
It was huge, man, fifty feet across, lights flashing all over it, and I was going, "Hey, get out of here," and it just took off --

Ben and Wolfgang look at each other.

BEN
(impassioned; continuing an argument)
We've got to go up again! There's something out there we don't know anything about! We can't just sit here on Earth...

He looks around. Across the yard Darren is trying to pick up on a GIRL. She excuses herself, and walks away from him. He tries another one.

BEN
(contininuing)
I mean, this is as good as it gets!

Wolfgang frowns at him.

WOLFGANG
Even if I wanted to, we almost ran out of air last time, and that's an insurmountable problem --

He stops as he realizes that Ben isn't listening; he's staring across the yard.

Lori has entered with a tray of hors d'oeuvres. She is absolutely gorgeous. She walks over to a group of girlfriends.

Ben looks at Wolfgang. Wolfgang looks up at the ceiling in disgust.

BEN
I'm going to do it.

WOLFGANG
What?

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED: (2) 169

BEN
I'm going to tell her how I feel.

WOLFGANG
It's your funeral.

Ben takes a deep breath, gets up, and walks over to Lori.

170 EXT. LORI'S HOUSE - PORCH 170

Ben approaches Lori as she stands talking to her friends.

BEN
Uh, Lori, could I talk to you for a second?

LORI
Sure. What is it?

BEN
(looking around at the others)
Uh, over there?

He leads her over to a private section of the backyard. Her friends start to giggle after they leave.

171 EXT. LORI'S HOUSE - PRIVATE PART OF BACKYARD 171

When they are out of sight of the others, Ben turns to her.

BEN
(referring to the music)
That's Duran Duran, isn't it? You've got their new album, right?

LORI
Sure, but --
(sees the look in his eyes)
Ben...

He leans forward and kisses her. She doesn't move, letting him do all the kissing, and then in spite of herself, actually starts to get involved in the kiss, closing her eyes.

Suddenly she pulls back and looks at him.

LORI
I'm sorry, Ben. I just don't feel that way about you. I like you a lot...

He stares at her.

BEN
Oh no.

* 172 EXT. STREET - LATE AFTERNOON 172 *

Ben, Wolfgang, and Darren walk home in the twilight.

(CONTINUED)

172 CONTINUED: 172

BEN
I'm going to kill myself.

WOLFGANG
What are you complaining about? No one would even talk to me.
(indicating his digital watch)
I hit five hundred on Martian Wars.

BEN
Maybe it's my breath.
(breathes into his cupped hands to see)
No. It's me.

DARREN
Hey, you got farther than I did.

WOLFGANG
Don't take it so hard. She's only a girl.

Ben turns on him.

BEN
What do you know about it?

WOLFGANG
Plenty! Girls are exactly the same as boys except for certain physical differences.

BEN
You are weird.

WOLFGANG
I am not.

BEN
And to top it off, here I have this once chance to go out and prove that I can do something, and you're too chicken to fly again.

WOLFGANG
(angry)
Chicken? You're suicidal! It's just to show off for Lori Swenson.

BEN
It's more important than that!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

172 CONTINUED: (2) 172

BEN (CONT'D)
Something happened out there that we can't explain, and I guess I'm the only one who wants to find out about it.

Ben walks angrily away toward his house.

BEN
(continuing; shouting)
See if I ever go to a party with <u>you</u> again!

WOLFGANG
(shouting)
See if I ever <u>talk</u> to you again!

Darren is left out in the street alone, watching the other two walk off in opposite directions. He shrugs and heads toward his own home.

172A *EXT. CREEK - NIGHT* 172A

The helicopter pilot gets out of a car and walks through the undergrowth in the creek. With him, we approach the covered ship, which looks a little spooky in the jungle-like surroundings. He frowns. Could it be...? He walks closer, and opens the hatch.

172B INT. SHIP 172B

The pilot picks up one of the kids' jackets, and smiles at how small it is: this thing is just a fort. Then he sees the breather masks. He holds one up. There's something about it that reminds him of last night, that face at the porthole.

He looks at a label inside one of the jackets.

It shows Ben's name and adress.

173 INT. BEN'S BEDROOM 173

Ben lies in bed, almost asleep. The DREAM MUSIC starts to build.

174 EXT. PLAIN - BEN'S DREAM 174

Ben stands on the dream plain again, the green clouds blowing overhead. He turns, and finds Wolfgang and Darren standing on either side of him.

(CONTINUED)

174 CONTINUED: 174

BEN
Hey!

WOLFGANG
I said I'm not talking to you.

DARREN
(looking around, suspicious)
What the hell is this?

Ben takes a few running steps.

BEN
I can get the missing part of the diagram this time! Come on!

Ben runs and JUMPS off the ground, SOARING up into the air. Hesitantly, Wolfgang and Darren follow, and gasp as they find themselves PULLED UP after him towards the clouds.

They turn in the air and hover, looking down at the DIAGRAM below them.

WOLFGANG
Is this what happened the first time?

BEN
Shut up and let me concentrate. I'm the one who has to remember it; this is my dream.

WOLFGANG
(miffed)
What makes you so sure?

BEN
Come on, cut it out. I might wake up any second.

Suddenly, Ben starts to drop. He shouts up to Wolfgang.

BEN
(continuing; enraged)
See? You've ruined it! I'm waking up!

He turns, trying to see the diagram as he falls, but it is too late. The ground comes RUSHING UP to meet him, and on impact:

175 INT. BEN'S BEDROOM 175

Ben SHOUTS as he wakes up!

176 INT. DARREN'S BEDROOM 176

Darren wakes up with a JOLT!

* 177 INT. WOLFGANG'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 177 *

* Wolfgang is already writing down the details of the diagram from the dream, frowning, hitting himself in the head as he squeezes the memory out. *

* WOLFGANG *
Come on!

* The signal begins to buzz on his walkie talkie and he * picks it up as he continues to write. *

* WOLFGANG *
(continuing)
What is it? I just had a dream weirder than yours.

178 INT. BEN'S BEDROOM 178

* Ben lies in bed, whispering excitedly into the walkie * talkie. *

BEN
You mean...
(daring to hope)
Did you get the diagram?

* 179 INT. WOLFGANG'S BEDROOM 179 *

* Wolfgang is still drawing. *

* WOLFGANG *
Yes, as a matter of fact I--

He looks up, bewildered; they've both had the same dream.

* WOLFGANG *
(continuing)
What's going on here?

180 EXT. DARREN'S BACKYARD - NIGHT 180

With a BURST OF MUSIC that continues to build, FLASHES OF LIGHT flare out through the windows of Darren's toolshed workshop.

181 INT. DARREN'S WORKSHOP 181

Darren finishes welding a small metal box onto the side of the Traegheitslosigkeit, as Wolfgang completes his new circuit board with a soldering gun at another table. Ben sits across from him, bursting with questions.

BEN
But what do you--

WOLFGANG
(jumpy)
I said don't talk! I have to concentrate.

Wolfgang solders the final connection, and brings the board over to Darren, who hooks it up to the central board through the new box.

Wolfgang sits down at the controls.

BEN
Maybe it's a--

WOLFGANG
Let's see what it does first, then we can talk about it and you can go off the deep end.

BEN
You're just scared because you can't explain what's going on.

WOLFGANG
I'm not scared! It's just that the whole thing seems like it's getting out of control.

He presses the power switch.

182 EXT. DARREN'S BACKYARD - NIGHT 182

The sides of the flimsy shed are BLOWN OUTWARD with a tremendous RUSH OF AIR.

Ben and Darren hug the ground, protecting themselves against the GALE OF WIND that blows from the Traegheitslosigkeit. Slowly they raise their heads, and look around for Wolfgang. He is nowhere to be seen.

A VOICE comes from above them.

WOLFGANG
(hoarse whisper)
Get me down! Turn it off!

(CONTINUED)

182 CONTINUED: (2) 182

Wolfgang floats fifteen feet above them, bobbing in the stream of air, turning end to end.

Darren reaches for the power cord, and yanks it out. The wind DIES DOWN and Wolfgang floats back down to them. He is out of breath, flushed, and very excited.

Darren grabs both of them and they duck under some nearby bushes. The yard is quiet again, and drunken SNORING can be heard from an open window at the back of Darren's house. A DOG BARKS in the distance.

WOLFGANG
(continuing; excited whisper)
This is our air! That thing's producing oxygen, maybe out of carbon dioxide, I don't know, but the main thing is, if we turn down the volume of air produced so it equals the amount we're breathing inside the field, now we can go!

Ben looks at him and smiles.

BEN
You feel it too.

WOLFGANG
(admits it)
Ever since I woke up--

DARREN
It's like that feeling in the dream when we were being pulled into the air; it never stopped.

Ben stands and looks up at the stars. High, DISTANT MUSIC starts to build up.

WOLFGANG
Somebody's calling us.

BEN
They've been calling us since the beginning.

We look up over his shoulder at the MILKY WAY.

The other two boys stand next to him, staring up.

BEN
(continuing)
Who knows from where.

(CONTINUED)

182 CONTINUED: (3) 182

WOLFGANG
And why. Why is a good question.

DARREN
We're never going to find out sitting around here.

BEN
I'm with you.

They both look at Wolfgang.

WOLFGANG
No one flies that ship better than me.

They join hands.

ALL
Blood.

182A INT. CHARLIE CARRUTHER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 182A

Charlie the pilot sits watching TV, troubled. It's The Day the Earth Stood Still, featuring one of the great flying saucers of all time. With sudden determination, he gets out of his chair.

183 INT. BEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 183

Ben looks into his parent's bathroom, where his father is brushing his teeth, getting ready for bed. Ben starts to say something, then changes his mind, and leaves unnoticed. He continues down the hall to the other bathroom, where his mother is brushing her teeth.

BEN
Mom?

MRR. CRANDALL
Ben, what are you doing up?

Ben takes time to word this carefully.

BEN
Remember one time you said to me about doing what I wanted with my life, and not letting anything get in the way?

MRS. CRANDALL
Sure, as long as you're not holding up a bank.

(CONTINUED)

183 CONTINUED: 183

BEN
And if I had something that I wanted to do, but if I told somebody, they might not want me to do it, how would that be? Should I tell them?

Mrs. Crandall thinks. She knows what Ben is saying. She turns and smiles at him.

MRS. CRANDALL
I think we've raised you so you know what's going on. You should go ahead and do what you think is right.

184 INT. BEN'S ROOM - NIGHT 184

With a RUSH OF MUSIC, Ben runs around his room, stuffing things into a knapsack.

He takes a dictionary, a desk encyclopedia, some leather gloves, a collapsible cup, and a harmonica.

He puts a piece of paper in a conspicuous place in his desk. On it is a list of his belonging with peoples' names next to them. At the top he writes, This is my will, and signs his name.

* 185 INT. WOLFGANG'S HALLWAY 185 *

* As the MUSIC BUILDS, Wolfgang crawls on his stomach, *
* commando-style, past his parents' open bedroom door. *

186 INT. DARREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 186

Darren puts a Sagittarius medallion on a silver chain around his neck. He looks at the mirror, and rubs a bruise on his cheek. He turns out the light.

187 INT. BEN'S KITCHEN 187

Ben sneaks past his kitchen, where his father is working late. His mother sits across from him, and they hold hands, talking in hushed tones.

Ben sits for a moment around the corner and listens to them.

(CONTINUED)

187 CONTINUED: 187

BEN
(barely whispering)
Good-bye.

He leaves.

188 OMITTED 188

189 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 189

Ben rounds the outside of his house, and comes to a sudden HALT as an adult FIGURE looms out of the shadows.

It is the pilot Charlie. Behind him is his car parked at the curb, door open. He holds Ben's jacket.

CHARLIE
Is this your jacket, kid? You were up in that UFO, weren't you?

Ben turns and runs. He grabs his bike and pedals for the creek.

Charlie is back starting his car, where he has located his co-pilot on the police radio.

CHARLIE
Gordon? This is Charlie. Listen, I know this is weird, but could you meet me at the corner where Elm cuts across the creek?

The car peels out.

* 190 OMITTED 190 *
& &
* 191 191 *

192 EXT. CREEK - NIGHT 192

Ben rides down into the creek on his bike, speeding up into the wind as he approaches the launch site.

193 EXT. CREEK 193

The MUSIC CLIMAXES as the boys' silhouettes meet next to the ship under a gigantic, brilliant moon; Darren runs up to Ben and Wolfgang, who are standing by the Thunder Road, helmets in hand.

BEN
We've got to get out here. Some guy knows about us and he's on his way here right now.

DARREN
So? We'll kick his butt.

Ben looks at him: he can't be serious. Darren turns and leads the way up into the ship. Ben follows. Wolfgang hangs back.

WOLFGANG
I still think we should talk about this. We don't know what we're doing.

BEN
What is it with you? You still don't want to go?

WOLFGANG
Maybe it's all coincidence.

BEN
You know, for a mental giant, sometimes you're a real doofus.

Wolfgang shrugs and joins them.

WOLFGANG
I'm just thinking of all the possibilities. What if they want to eat us--

(gets disgusted look on face)

... or... inject us with larvae that'll digest us from inside. We don't even know who they are, or what they look like.

Darren opens the hatch.

A tiny figure with a grotesque face jumps at him, grabbing at him with large claws, making him drop the battery.

FIGURE
Aaaaaaah!

(CONTINUED)

193 CONTINUED: 193

DARREN
Shit!

Darren wrestles it away, and stops as the figure starts to giggle. It pulls off its mask with its rubber claws. It is Ludwig.

WOLFGANG
Ludwig, I'm going to kill you.

LUDWIG
I'll wake up Mom. You're not supposed to be in the creek.

Wolfgang looks at the others, worried.

WOLFGANG
I'll let you play with my Martian Mars Watch.

LUDWIG
No, I want to play with you guys.

BEN
Ludwig, can you keep a secret?

LUDWIG
Sure.

BEN
Well, that's a real spaceship, and we're really going up there tonight, and nobody's supposed to know, 'cause if they did, they'd try to stop us.

Ludwig looks around at the three earnest faces.

LUDWIG
I want to go too.

The three look at each other, at a loss, when suddenly there is the sound of a car ENGINE, and headlights shine down into the creek from the overpass.

WOLFGANG
Quick, hide!

They jump into the ivy at the side of the creek, Ludwig playing along.

WOLFGANG
(continuing)
Ludwig, you want to do us the biggest favor you've ever done anyone in your life?

(CONTINUED)

193 CONTINUED: (2) 193

LUDWIG
(considers)
Okay, if I can play Martian Wars.

194 EXT. CREEK - BUSHES 194

Charlie and his co-pilot Gordon sneak through the bushes by the side of the creek, approaching the launch site.

GORDON
This is nuts, Charlie. These are supposed to be kids in this thing?

CHARLIE
I just want you to see it, and tell me what you think.

Suddenly, blinding lights that look to us like the Thunder Road's headlights go on front of them, and Charlie sprints ahead.

CHARLIE
(continuing)
Come on!

195 EXT. CREEK - LAUNCH SITE 195

The two men approach the brilliant lights, which are bright enough that we can't see the source.

They run up to it.

It is the trash can, with two flashlights and a TV antenna tied to the sides of it. Gordon looks at Charlie, and takes off the lid.

Inside sits Ludwig, making rocket sounds with his mouth. Charlie's story is totally discredited.

Ludwig looks up past the two men, where the dark Thunder Road hangs in the air thirty feet above them.

196 INT. SHIP 196

As the three look down, Ben notices that Darren has a bruise on one cheek.

BEN
What happened to your cheek?

(CONTINUED)

196 CONTINUED: 196

DARREN
Ah, my Dad woke up and got mad about the shed.

BEN
He hit you?

DARREN
He just flies off the handle. I think I look a lot like my Mom, which doesn't help things.

He stares down at his lucky PENNY, and tightens his fist around it.

DARREN
(continuing)
Let's get going.

WOLFGANG
(typing at the controls)
Here goes nothing.

197 EXT. CITY 197

With ADVENTUROUS MUSIC, the city falls away as the ship zooms past us, a blur of speed.

198 EXT. SPACE 198

The STARS of the galaxy open up before us, as the Thunder Road roars toward them, BLASTING into a point of light.

199 INT. SHIP 199

The velocity figures on the TV screen keep increasing. Ben tests the air flowing from the Traegheitslosigkeit, watching it blow the hairs on the back of his arm, then taking a breath.

WOLFGANG
Don't look directly at the sun. We should have thought to bring protective glasses.

DARREN
You know it takes the light from the sun eight seconds to reach Earth?

(CONTINUED)

199 CONTINUED: 199

WOLFGANG
(laughs)
Try eight minutes.

DARREN
That's what I meant.

He looks out the window, feeling dumb again. Ben sees this, and tries to change the subject. He stares out at the stars.

BEN
* I wonder if they've missed us yet. *

* 200 OMITTED 200 *

201 INT. BEN'S ROOM 201

* Ben's mother opens his door to check on him, as she did *
* when she turned off "War of the Worlds" earlier, and sees *
the pillows that he's bunched up under the blankets to look like him.

Something on his desk catches her attention and she quietly walks over to it. Has she seen his Will?

She reaches directly for it, but pushes it out of the way, not even noticing it. She's spotted an adventure magazine with a lurid cover of a scantily clad girl hidden among the books on his desk.

Giving the pillows on the bed a look, she walks out of the room, shaking her head.

MRS. CRANDALL
(still with a sense of humor)
Mister, you're that close to being grounded.

202 EXT. SPACE 202

The ship begins to pass the moon, which grows steadily bigger in front of them.

203 INT. SHIP 203

The three look out their windows at it.

BEN
We could go there if we wanted to.

(CONTINUED)

203 CONTINUED: 203

WOLFGANG
Sure. NASA has to plot trajectories to hit the moon in its orbit precisely, but we're going so fast I could just sort of aim for it.

204 EXT. SPACE 204

The moon looms very large below them, its scarred surface coming into crystal-clear focus.

It swings away from them as they fly past.

205 INT. SHIP 205

Ben is becoming nervous

BEN
What happens now?

Wolfgang shakes his head. Suddenly, the Troglodyte starts to make the strange TRILLING NOISE it made during the first flight.

WOLFGANG
Oh boy. Look at this.

Figures and numbers are flashing across the screen at an incredible rate.

The ships starts to move by itself.

WOLFGANG
(continuing)
Here we go again!

206 EXT. SPACE 206

With an ominous CHORD, the THUNDER ROAD begins to pick up speed.

207 INT. SHIP 207

An eerie HUM is building in pitch and volume inside the Thunder Road, as the force field begins to VIBRATE.

Darren puts his hand on the hull. He re-tightens the loose bolt, which is unwinding with the vibrations that are making the ship BUZZ.

(CONTINUED)

207 CONTINUED: 207

Wolfgang is looking at a COLUMN of NUMBERS that are rapidly counting down to zero.

BEN
What is it? What's happening?

WOLFGANG
(excited; nervous)
Don't look at me!

The hum biulds to a deafening ROAR.

The numbers reach zero.

208 EXT. SPACE 208

The ship explodes into a bullet of LIGHT, and blasts forward disappearing into the stars of the universe.

209 EXT. UNIVERSE 209

The tiny ship leaves a trail of light as it plunges through the UNIVERSE.

210 INT. SHIP 210

The three sit, dazed. The numbers in the POWER COLUMN on the screen are dropping rapidly, as the drain on the battery increases. Darren and Wolfgang start to panic.

DARREN
(nervous; sweating)
What if we want to go back?

WOLFGANG
(exploding)
Oh great! Now he thinks of this!

BEN
(shouting)
Will you guys shut up?!
(looking out the window; reverant)
Don't spoil it.

Wolfgang and Darren look at each other, aghast: Ben is enjoying this!

211 EXT. SPACE 211

The streak of light FLASHES out of nowhere and comes to halt; the ship has reached its destination.

With ominous MUSIC, we slowly move in on the Thunder Road.

212 INT. SHIP 212

The boys are looking around out the windows.

DARREN
Where are we?

BEN
I don't --
(sees something)
Oh my God.

213 EXT. SPACE 213

A monstrous ALIEN SHIP hangs in space above them, dark and foreboding against the stars. Spikes and curved surfaces make up its shadowy design, and there is something odd, and unbalanced about it.

It doesn't look friendly.

214 INT. SHIP 214

The boys are staring out the windows at the ship above them.

WOLFGANG
I told you! I told you we shouldn't have come, but oh no --

DARREN
(scared)
Will you shut up? How do we get out of here?

Wolfgang pounds the keys. Nothing happens.

WOLFGANG
We don't.

215 EXT. SPACE 215

The Thunder Road turns and begins to move toward the larger ship.

(CONTINUED)

215 CONTINUED: 215

It grows smaller and smaller in comparison to the gargantuan shape.

A VALVE on the side of the alien ship SPIRALS OPEN; it is pitch-black inside.

216 INT. THUNDER ROAD 216

The boys look around as their ship is pulled in through the portal, the faint illumination of the stars replaced by total darkness.

WOLFGANG
(quietly)
Eaten alive.

DARREN
Shut up!

217 INT. ALIEN SHIP 217

From the tiny light issuing from the Thunder Road's portals, we can only see that it is floating in the middle of an enormous dark area. As the stars are blotted out by the port spiraling shut, the ship is left alone in its own illumination.

218 INT. THUNDER ROAD 218

Wolfgang is staring at the computer screen.

WOLFGANG
It's going to turn off!

DARREN
(shouting)
What do we do?

WOLFGANG
Hang on!
(counts down with numbers on screen)
Three... two... one!

The field turns off with a SLIGHT HISS of air pressure equalization. Wolfgang grabs the Traegheitslosigkeit to shield it with his body.

219 INT. ALIEN SHIP 219

The ship drops twenty feet onto a metallic surface, and lands on its side with a CRASH!

220 INT. THUNDER ROAD 220

The inside of the ship is in shambles, the loose equipment scattered all over. The three are shaken, but alive.

WOLFGANG
I think I'm dead.

In the tangle of debris, he thinks he sees his leg, reaches out and touches it.

WOLFGANG
(continuing)
I can't feel it!

DARREN
That's my leg, jerk.

They take off their breather masks and unstrap themselves. Ben takes a test breath.

BEN
I guess it's oxygen.

WOLFGANG
We're up the creek if it's not.

He jiggles a switch on the computer, and turns to the others, with dread.

WOLFGANG
(continuing)
The controls aren't responding; something's keeping us here.

Darren turns to look out the window and swallows nervously.

DARREN
Let's go kick its butt.

BEN
(sarcastic)
Yeah, like the time you kicked Steve Jackson's.

Ben shoulders a coil of ROPE, and reaches for the hatch. They look at each other, and extend their hands in the secret handshake.

ALL
Blood.

WOLFGANG
I wish we hadn't chosen that word.

(CONTINUED)

220 CONTINUED: 220

Ben opens the hatch. He shines his FLASHLIGHT out into the darkness, revealing nothing. Wolfgang and Darren grab flashlights and follow him.

We MOVE through the hatch with them as they crawl out.

221 INT. ALIEN SHIP 221

From in back of the boys, we see them stand up and aim their flashlights around, piercing the darkness with long shafts of light.

They are in a LANDING BAY that looms over them like a cavern. It is constructed in a strange, ancient-looking, almost Egyptian architecture.

As their flashlights reveal more of the room, it becomes obvious that they are standing on one of the WALLS, and the whole ship is turned SIDEWAYS.

BEN
It's on its side!

He stops as his voice echoes back to him across the enormous room.

DARREN
Where is everybody? This is a <u>big</u> ship.

WOLFGANG
Maybe they were eaten by someth --

He stops as Darren gives him a look.

Ben leads the way as they walk quietly to a wall that has a sideways DOOR in it. It is thirty feet long, ten feet tall, and has a horizontal crack across the center.

As they approach it, a CONTROL set below it on the wall LIGHTS UP.

BEN
(nervous)
Through here?

WOLFGANG
(snaps)
How would I know?

Tentatively, Wolfgang reaches up and presses the control on the wall. A door under them WHISKS open and they fall through the floor with a SHOUT.

*222 *thru *226 OMITTED 222 thru 226

*226A INT. SLIDE 226A

The three boys tumble as they slide down a chute, which twists and turns like a funhouse slide.

*226B INT. CORRIDOR 226B

The trio falls out of the wall of a corridor, dimly illuminated by phosphorescent PANELS. Because it is sideways, it is wider than it is tall, and done in the same strange architecture.

They pick themselves up, retrieve their flashlights, and start to explore the corridor. They pass a large reflective DISC set into the wall. Darren jumps at first, then realizes it's only himself, checks his hair, and moves on. Ben passes, glancing at himself too. As Wolfgang moves in front of the mirror, we see for a brief instant the faint reflection of something else looking out at him. It is strange and alien, and watching him curiously, but when he catches it out of the corner of his eye and turns to look, it is gone. All he can see is his own surprised reflection, which he makes a face at, then hurries on.

Ahead, Darren leans down into an opening in the floor, shining his flashlight down.

*226C INT. UPSIDE DOWN CORRIDOR 226C

In another corridor, he appears to be coming up out of the floor, shining his flashlight up at the ceiling. The gravity has changed its axis, and Darren is half way in between. He shakes his head, very confused.

*226D INT. CORRIDOR 226D

Darren gets up from the hole and looks at the others.

DARREN
The gravity's weird in here.

WOLFGANG
That's why we're walking on the walls. Something's wrong with this whole place.

They move off down the corridor. Behind them, a strange silhouette peeks up out of the hole that Darren just looked into.

227 INT. CHAMBER 227

A door OPENS and the boys peer through. They are in a long, misty CORRIDOR that stretches away in front of them. The walls are covered with intricate designs and instruments. Lights dimly flicker on and off in different sections, as if power might be failing.

Darren suddenly points.

DARREN
What's that?!

A glimpse of movement, a SHADOW, disturbs the mist far away down the corridor, flickers, and is gone.

Ben immediately moves to follow it.

WOLFGANG
Wait!

Ben's arm brushes by a delicate glass TUBE on the wall. It falls and SMASHES, splattering a strange liquid on the floor. Instantly an ALARM blasts through the corridor, and the two halves of the door SLAM shut behind them.

They look around, as a RUMBLING of something approaching fills their ears. Wolfgang grabs Ben, and points out into the mist. A huge MACHINE that fills the corridor from top to bottom and side to side ROLLS towards them on tracks set into the walls. It has a slight pod-like appearance, almost as if it were a nightmare incarnation of the Podbot robot from the drive-in movie back on Earth. Projecting from its front are various implements that look like they could hack apart, saw through, or dissect anything. Two huge VACUUM SCOOPS look like they could ingest all three boys without any problem.

The boys turn and run, but the corridor ends five feet in back of them. They are trapped.

The machine is upon them. The huge rumbling behemoth approaches to within a few feet of them, its implements poised to attack.

Suddenly, all the power dies in the corridor, the lights fading to black, the machine coming to a halt. The boys heave a sigh of relief, but instantly the lights and the robot come back to life, more deadly than before. It raises its arms for the kill.

Then a short VACUUM NOZZLE extends out of a small hatch near the floor, inhales Ben's mess, and the whole machine retreats quickly down the corridor.

Wolfgang collapses against the wall in relief, and falls through it as an access hatch swings open. Ben and Darren follow him.

228 INT. HATCHWAY 228

It is pitch black in the small corridor as the three catch their breath.

DARREN
What was that?

WOLFGANG
You tell me and we'll both know.

An ECHO comes from the end of the passage.

ECHO
You tell me and we'll both know.

Wolfgang jumps, scared, the relaxes as he realizes what it is.

WOLFGANG
False alarm.

ECHO
False alarm.

WOLFGANG
Only an echo.

ECHO
Only an echo.

WOLFGANG
I guess we're getting kind of jumpy.

ECHO
You tell me and we'll both know.

The three look at each other.

Ben turns his light on, and aims it. The small corridor is empty. Slowly, he advances, the others following him.

They reach a large, round pillar, and as they start to go around it, we see a shadow backing up, circling away from them.

Ben hears it again, motions to the others to stay, and starts backing around the pillar the other way.

We see some weird feet attached to the wall above his head as he sneaks past.

He turns back, and we see the shape backing up toward him, neither seeing the other. They bump, and Ben turns.

(CONTINUED)

228 CONTINUED: 228

He screams! Inches away from his face, staring at him, is a hideous ALIEN FACE, a little smaller that his, but demonic-looking. It screams too, in surprise, and jumps up out of sight.

Ben aims his flashlight up, to see the creature clinging to the wall.

BEN
Oh my God!

The creature moves its mouth and Ben's voice comes out.

CREATURE
Oh my God!

We get a brief glimpse before it springs out of the light: long grasshopper-like back legs, and a startled, large-eyed face.

* It hops away down the corridor. Ben shouts to Wolfgang and * Darren.

BEN
Come on!

The three boys run after the fleeing shape.

229 INT. CONTROL ROOM 229

Doors slide open, and the boys enter a gigantic, sideways control room. A monstrous console commands one wall, and everything is on a scale for thirty-foot-tall beings. It is dim and smokey, as if the air resources are giving out.

* The boys look around for the creature, and Wolfgang points. *

Reaching out from around the immense console comes first one hand, then another, and finally the bizarre face. It looks at them curiously.

The boys stand, breathing deeply. This is first contact with alien life; they are making history. Ben looks at the others, then takes a step forward.

BEN
We come in peace.

The Creature stares at him. Then it speaks, a weird sound made by an alien mouth making the wrong noises.

CREATURE
Well *duh*.

(CONTINUED)

229 CONTINUED: 229

Ben looks back. Are his ears playing tricks on him?

BEN
What?

CREATURE
Gee, Beave, what do I look like, some kind of goofball?

Then comes the strangest yet; it opens its mouth and approximates the SOUND OF CANNED LAUGHTER.

* Wolfgang's had enough. He steps forward toward the towering console. *

* WOLFGANG *
What the hell's going on here?

The Creature changes its mouth and speaks in a weird Cuban accent.

CREATURE
Now honey, don't be angry.

* More CANNED LAUGHTER. Darren steps forward. *

DARREN
* This is too weird. *

The Creature SPRINGS from in back of the console, and
* lands next to Darren. *

CREATURE
* (an advertisement) *
* When headache pain strikes, fight *
* back with Anacin. It's sure, *
* strong, gentle relief against -- *

A smaller alien FORM suddenly appears out of the shadows next to the first one, and pulls at its arm, SPEAKING in an alien language.

It is obviously female. She bears some resemblance to the Creature, but all the features have been put together differently.

She has long, sleek legs not grasshopper like at all, her face more feline and almost beautiful, although she's definitely a kid sister.

CREATURE
(continuing; quickly; a TV phrase from the Beaver)
That's my goofy sister.

(CONTINUED)

229 CONTINUED: (2) 229

The female creature talks to the first one, tugging on its arm, urging it to say something. The Creature objects to her bugging it, and they get into a short quarrel.

Suddenly, another muffled RUMBLE shakes the ship, and all the LIGHTS in the room flicker until they are almost out. The Creature looks up.

The first Creature turns to the boys, and puts a few of its own English words together. It has memorized them off television, each word in a different voice, from a different program.

CREATURE
(continuing)
Did... you... bring... power?

DARREN
What?

CREATURE
Power!... Power!
(then, more easily in TV phrases)
Come on down and let Carol Merrill show you what's behind Door Number One, Door Number Two, or Door Number Three.

He rushes the boys over to a giant power panel, where rows upon rows of readouts show that the power is down to almost nothing. Only the last few readouts are lit, and they are flickering, about to go out.

He turns and points out a giant portal, they can see parts of the ships going dark, and some weakened parts blowing out into space. The dark area is taking over the whole ship, approaching them.

BEN
We didn't bring any power.
(realizes)
We didn't understand the dreams.

The alien's mouth drops open. He turns to his sister, and says a few disbelieving words in their native language.

The sister squeaks, and with tears of frustration in her eyes, and walks over to them. She starts scolding them in the alien language: how could have come all this way and not brought something to repair the ship?

The boys look at each other: how were they supposed to know? Darren takes out his lucky penny and jiggles it nervously in his hand.

(CONTINUED)

229 CONTINUED: (3) 229

The alien points at the penny.

CREATURE
What that?

The Creature snatches it up and touches it to the end of his tongue. There is short SNAP! OF ELECTRICITY.

The alien makes a Stooges' Curly "Wooooop woop-woop-woop".

CREATURE
(continuing)
Perfect!

Another MUFFLED RUMBLE shakes the room, and the Creature looks wildly around. DANGER signals start flashing on all the consoles in the room, illuminating their faces with red glows; eerie alarms wail through the ship.

230 ANGLE ON CONTROL PANEL 230

Huge DYNAMO-LIKE MACHINES are grinding to a halt as the boys run across the floor toward a control console. The creature pulls off a back panel and PULLS out some connectors, jury-rigging them to fit the penny.

WOLFGANG
He's nuts; that little--

The Creature gestures to the rest of the towering equipment in the room.

CREATURE
(in different TV voices)
This metal is very rare where we come from. We use it for power.

Ben looks out the portal, where the dark area of the ship rapidly approaches them.

BEN
You better do something quick!

CREATURE
(in a Scottish accent)
I'm workin' as fast as I can, Cap'n!

231 EXT. SPACE 231

The alien ship is almost totally dark, pulsing with the final power surges.

The last lights flicker and go out.

232 CLOSEUP - PENNY 232

The Creature slaps the penny into place between two alien connectors, and a HUM starts to grow around it.

233 INT. CONTROL ROOM 233

The Creature reaches up and turns a switch. With a SHRIEK!, the dynamos start to spin up to speed again.

Lights begin to come on in the smokey room.

234 & 235 OMITTED 234 & 235

236 EXT. SPACE 236

With TRIUMPHANT MUSIC, LIGHTS start to come on all over the exterior of the ship.

If anything, it winds up looking akin to a shiny old Chevy, with fins, lights and curves that are built for speed.

237 INT. CONTROL ROOM 237

The aliens and the earth kids stand looking out the observation window at the ship, which is starting to shine like a Christmas tree. In the control room around them, lights on panels and walls are becoming brighter and brighter, giving the room a magical quality. Readouts and controls continue to blink back on throughout the following sequence, as the ship resumes normal operation.

The Sister Creature is standing next to Ben. She stares up at the sky, and says something in a female voice from an old TV show.

SISTER CREATURE
(dreamily)
I never get tired of looking at the stars, *do you?*

(CONTINUED)

237 CONTINUED: 237

Her little hand reaches out and takes Ben's. He looks nervously at her out of the corner of his eye; what is this, does she have a crush on him? Aside from being an alien, she's really too young; it's as if your best friend's little sister wanted to go steady.

He smiles at her and withdraws his hand. She lays her head on his shoulder, and he looks embarrassed over at Darren, who smirks.

Suddenly, several TV screens on a control panel blink on, showing Earth programs and commercials, the images distorted and rearranged for alien viewing. On a large screen, Lucy says something funny to Ricky. Both aliens open their mouths and produce the proper response: canned laughter. The boys stare at them.

DARREN
They've been watching reruns.

Wak shakes his hand congratulating him on his discovery.

WAK
(an old commercial)
Well, Tom, maybe what you've got isn't ordinary dandruff.

WOLFGANG
Now will somebody tell me what the hell is going on here?

Strange SOUNDS are emanating from a console, and the powered room has a brilliant, shiny look.

The Creature starts snapping its version of fingers in time to the weird SOUNDS, and we realize it is music.

CREATURE
(Eddie Haskell)
Cool down, Gertrude.
(struggling with different voices)
I am Wak. My sister is Neek. We've been... watching your... messages for a long time... and we wanted to come... to see your planet.

Wak is showing off, and continues snapping his fingers as he walks around the control room.

(CONTINUED)

237 CONTINUED: (2) 237

WAK
(continuing)
So we hopped in our ship, and... too bad... we ran out of gas, man. So we sent messages with that thing.

He points to a large TELEPATHIC BOOSTER, which has large adjustable sensors designed to fit the aliens' craniums, pick up their thoughts, and amplify them. It seems to be aimed towards space, at Earth.

WAK
(continuing)
But hey... like now we got nothing to worry about.

238 EXT. SPACE 238

Something large and pitch-black hangs in space above them. As it draws nearer, faint details begin to emerge, until it becomes obvious that this is an ALIEN SHIP, a thousand times bigger than the one they are on.

A SECTION of the large ship SWINGS OPEN, and swallows the little ship.

239 INT. OBSERVATION ROOM 239

A sudden CRASH of an external docking device resounds through the ship, interrupting Wak. The whole room starts to tilt, the boys and the aliens sliding down the wall as the ship turns back to an upright position.

The two aliens look at each other with terror on their faces.

BEN
What was that?

WAK
Come on!

The two aliens run out of the room, and the earth kids follow.

240 OMITTED 240

241 INT. CORRIDOR 241

They all run along one of the ship's corridors. Neek raises her head and listens as the POUNDING of huge FEET becomes audible.

WOLFGANG
What is it? What's happening?

The aliens ignore his question, and just keep running.

242 INT. LANDING BAY 242

They enter the landing bay, where the Thunder Road sits in the shadows, having slid down the wall when the ship righted itself. Wak shushes them, and listens. Everything is quiet. He turns to the rest and puts his finger to his mouth.

WAK
(Elmer Fudd)
Be vewwy vewwy quiet.

Quickly, before they start the run to the ship, Wak hands Wolfgang a small OBJECT; a sphere with a button on it.

WAK
(continuing)
Here. This is for you.

WOLFGANG
What is it?

Wolfgang starts to press the button, but Wak stops him.

WAK
Save it for sometime when you're with a lot of friends.

Wolfgang puts it into his knapsack. Darren gives Wak his Sagittarius medallion.

DARREN
This is the first thing I ever bought with my own money.

Wak takes it as Neek leans toward Ben, speaking in halting English.

NEEK
(shyly)
You were the first to hear the dreams.

She unties a small CRYSTAL from her neck, and gives it to him.

(CONTINUED)

242 CONTINUED: 242

NEEK
(continuing)
Always listen to your dreams.

Ben takes it, still a little embarrassed. He checks his back pocket and finds the harmonica he took from home.

BEN
Here. I want you to have this.

He gives it to her and she smiles up at him with her enormous eyes. She eats the harmonica.

Silently, they start to sneak out across the open space toward their ship. Ben looks around uneasily; something isn't right. The ship is just ahead of them. We pan with them to reveal a series of columns behind them. They don't see that the last two columns have two giant feet at the bottom; they are actually huge legs. The toes of one foot are drumming the ground angrily.

Wolfgang turns one last time to Wak.

WOLFGANG
Why won't you tell us what this is all about?

WAK
Much too complicated --

Wak sees the feet. He gulps, and slowly looks up. The boys follow his gaze. Above them stands a huge MONSTER, towering over them. It is inhuman, and its expression seems to be furious.

BEN
(whispers to Neek)
What is that?

NEEK
(whispers)
Our father.

Ben looks at her astonished.

BEN
(whispers)
You... you're kids!

Neek nods, embarrassed.

NEEK
(a TV phrase)
We took my Dad's car. We don't even have a driver's license.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

242 CONTINUED: (2) 242

NEEK (CONT'D)
(looks at Ben)
We're in big trouble.

* The alien father lets out an earth-shaking roar, and reaches a giant claw down toward them. *

* 243 OMITTED 243 *

244 EXT. SPACE 244

For the first time it is revealed that the gigantic father ship has an angry "expression" in its design. The "mouth" opens and "spits" out the Thunder Road, and the little Earth ship zips away, escaping from the huge ship's angry gaze.

245 EXT. SPACE 245

The father ship and the Thunder Road both BLAST into hyperspeed, leaving in opposite directions.

DISSOLVE TO:

246 EXT. EARTH 246

The curvature of the Earth hangs blue and beautiful in space. The Thunder Road drops toward the United States, which lies under the shadow of night.

247 EXT. CITY - NIGHT 247

The ship swoops down out of the sky and flies over their own town, lights from a few cars and houses visible below.

248 INT. SHIP 248

The boys look out the portholes, pointing.

BEN
There's Safeway!

DARREN
There's my house. My Dad's up late.

* Wolfgang checks his readouts. *

(CONTINUED)

248 CONTINUED: 248

WOLFGANG
It's returning to its point of origin, so we'll --

All the power cuts out.

249 EXT. SKY 249

We drop with the ship as it tumbles toward the ground.

250 INT. SHIP 250

The boys yell as they fall.

Wolfgang clicks the power switch back and forth.

The power blinks back on.

251 EXT. SHIP 251

The ship comes to a halt as the field takes over.

252 INT. SHIP 252

WOLFGANG
We're almost out of power. It'll cut out again.

DARREN
Let's land. Get us down!

WOLFGANG
Where?

BEN
There's the river!

253 INT. LORI SWENSON'S BEDROOM 253

Lori is lying on her bed, trying to go to sleep, looking out the window.

Suddenly, she sits up as she sees the Thunder Road hanging in the sky. As she leaps up and looks out the window, it plunges downward again.

254 INT. SHIP 254

The approaching ground is visible through the portholes.

The power cuts out completely.

WOLFGANG
That was it. Here we go!

Darren lets out one of his rebel yells that builds to:

255 OMITTED 255

255A EXT. CREEK - NIGHT 255A

The ship plummets into a deep part of the RIVER, sending up an enormous EXPLOSION OF WATER, SMASHES into the ancient, rusting CARS that are decaying there, and comes to rest, starting to sink into the mud.

256 INT. LORI'S ROOM 256

Lori gasps, and pulls on a coat and shoes.

257 EXT. LORI'S HOUSE 257

She climbs out the window, slides down the tree, and takes off running toward the river.

258 INT. SHIP 258

The three dig themselves out of the debris inside the ship. Everything is smashed, and water is starting to spray in through cracks.

Oblivious, Wolfgang is holding a broken component from the controls.

WOLFGANG
The Troglodyte's gone.

DARREN
(looking at the water)
We've got to get out of here.

He opens the hatch, and water starts to pour in.

259 & 260 OMITTED 259 & 260

260A EXT. CREEK - FENCE 260A

Lori ducks behind a fence, watching the ship.

261 OMITTED 261

262 EXT. CREEK 262

Out of the wreckage crawl a torn, dirty Wolfgang, Ben and Darren. They look tough-bitten, like Explorers. They stare around at the creek; they are home.

Darren takes the other two by the shoulders.

DARREN
We made it.

Ben checks his pocket and finds Neek's crystal crushed into a fine powder.

The three look down at the remains of their ship. It sinks into the mud until it is gone.

BEN
So long.

Lori watches from a hiding place. What the hell is going on here?

The boys turn away, and walk home with their arms over each other's shoulders, three friends forever.

BEN
(reminiscing)
You know, Wolfgang, back when this all started --

WOLFGANG
I've had it with that name. From now on I'm going to be known by another name entirely.

DARREN
What's it going to be?

WOLFGANG
(whips off glasses)
"Wolf."

263 EXT. SCHOOLYARD - MORNING 263

With a FANFARE OF TRUMPETS, the three walk into the schoolyard the next morning like returning heroes.

(CONTINUED)

263 CONTINUED: 263

They walk taller, in proportion to their adventures, even though the kids around them don't seem to notice.

One does. Steve Jackson looks at the trio's new attitude, and doesn't like it. He nods to his cronies, and they follow around the end of a school wing, hidden from the other kids.

264 ANGLE ON END OF WING 264

Jackson stops the three in their tracks.

STEVE
I think it's time for you guys to get beat up again.

Jackson and his buddies back them up against the wall. One slaps Wolfgang's knapsack out of his hand, and the gift from Wak falls out. Jackson picks it up.

STEVE
(continuing)
What's this? A science project?

WOLFGANG
Give it back! It needs to be tested in a controlled environment

Jackson holds it out, then yanks it away.

STEVE
What is it, huh? What is it?

BEN
We don't know! Don't do it --

Darren stops Ben with a look: let him do it.

Jackson sneers at Ben and flips the ball in the air. It comes down in his hand directly on the button. There is a burst of green gas that envelops Jackson, then dissolves into thin air. He looks surprised for a moment, coughing, then looks around; nothing has happened, except that the sphere is gone.

Then all his clothes turn to dust and fall to the ground.

His buddies stare at him, shocked, then start to laugh.

STEVE
Shut up! Get me some clothes, man!

They aren't any help. He looks at the trio.

(CONTINUED)

264 CONTINUED: 264

DARREN
Watch out, we'll do something even worse.

Jackson turns and runs around the corner towards the bathroom, but there is a hall full of boys and girls, who start to scream when they see him. He is experiencing every kid's worst nightmare; to be caught nude at school.

He makes it to the bathroom, runs inside and locks the door.

The three boys stare after him.

BEN
That was meant for us, you know.

WOLFGANG
(looking skyward)
Great sense of humor.

DARREN
We'll have to pay him back some day.

Lori Swenson walks past them. She looks at Ben in a knowing way, and maybe for the first time, romantically; she'd seen him land in a spaceship the night before.

LORI
Hi, Ben. Have a nice trip?

BEN
Huh? Oh sure.

She walks past, and he looks after her, frowning. How could she possibly...?

265 INT. BEN'S KITCHEN 265

Ben runs in after school and hugs his Mom.

BEN
Hi, Mom.

MRS. CRANDALL
Well, hello. What's all the excitement about?

BEN
Nothing.

Ben's father sits at the table. He exchanges a glance with Mrs. Crandall; she's done some lobbying for Ben.

(CONTINUED)

265 CONTINUED: 265

MR. CRANDALL
Ben, we had a talk; sometimes I lose track of how much these things mean to you. If you promise to earn half the money, I think we can help you go to that space camp.

Ben looks from one to the other, remembers what they're talking about.

BEN
Oh that. I don't need to go there.

His parents look at each other, perplexed. Ben stops, realizing what they've done for him.

BEN
(continuing)
It's just that... I...
(doesn't know what to say)
Thanks!

He runs out. His mother shrugs and smiles.

266 INT. BEN'S HALL 266

Bill is walking in the front door as Ben rushes past.

BILL
(jingling car keys in his hand; lording it over him)
Hey, Ben, need a ride anywhere?

BEN
(scoffing)
You mean on this planet?

267 OMITTED 267

267A EXT. HILL - DAY 267A

Wolfgang and Ben stand on top of the hill where they did their first experiments with the Troglodyte. The season is beginning to change, leaves falling from the trees around them, and they wear warmer clothes.

The boys walk in a way that is subtly older, more mature than the way they ran to school before. Ever so slightly they have grown up.

(CONTINUED)

267A CONTINUED: 267A

BEN
It's weird. I feel sad.

WOLFGANG
You too? It's like it never happened.

BEN
(quiet, looks up toward the sky)
We don't have anything. No proof.

WOLFGANG
It's frustrating too! I mean, is that it? Nothing in my life will ever top that.

DISSOLVE TO:

268 EXT. PLAIN - BEN'S DREAM 268

With a RUSH OF MUSIC, the boys step out onto the dream plain, dressed in their flight outfits from the Thunder Road, carrying the helmets under their arms like astronauts waiting on a launchpad.

Wolfgang is still a little groggy with sleep.

WOLFGANG
(looking around)
Where...?

BEN
Wake up!
(gently slaps Wolf's face; leans close)
Listen to your dreams!

Ben shouts with excitement, they run three steps, and with another FANFARE, they leap into the air, flying up and up.

DARREN
I must have fallen asleep reading. Can you believe that? Me, reading a book.

WOLFGANG
He's sending again. That kid's a disciplinary problem.

BEN
Let's go!

(CONTINUED)

268 CONTINUED: 268

They fly out over the unearthly plain and see another diagram on it, much more complicated than the first one.

Wolfgang points to different areas of the drawing.

WOLFGANG
Darren, you take that third, Ben, over there.

DARREN
Call me when you wake up.

BEN
Let's meet at my place, on the roof!

He swoops away, doing loops and somersaults in the air.

Ben studies his part of the drawing, concentrating, then starts to fall toward it.

BEN
(continuing)
Here we go again!

We fall with him, down to the plain, MUSIC BUILDING, the diagram growing larger and larger until:

269 INT. LORI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 269

With a THUNDEROUS CHORD, Lori wakes up. She looks around. The dream was so vivid; could it be...?

She runs to her closet for some clothes.

270 EXT. BEN'S ROOF - NIGHT 270

* As MUSIC BUILDS, the three boys on Ben's roof bend over a rough copy of the schematic from the dream, composed of three different papers taped together. *

WOLFGANG
I can't tell for sure, but this section over here appears to be an extremely powerful --

BEN
It looks like it's upside down.

WOLFGANG
It is not upside down.

(CONTINUED)

270 CONTINUED: 270

They stop as they hear a noise from the edge of the roof. Lori climbs up the ladder and stares at them, wondering.

BEN
Lori! What...?

LORI
I had this dream...

Ben smiles at her, and this moment seals the beginning of their romance. She walks over and Wolf stares at her a little suspiciously.

LORI
(looking at the diagram)
What is it?

BEN
We don't know.

DARREN
These look like electric motors over here.

LORI
My dad's got an old golf cart he never uses anymore.

The boys look at each other; she's okay.

MUSIC BUILDS to a final CRESCENDO as Wolf continues to point out different components, and Ben and Lori move in closer to look at the drawing; we see, hidden from the two other boys, their fingertips brush, and they holds hands. They look at each other, and then up at the sky.

We CRANE farther up and back, leaving them small on the rooftop, under the galaxy of stars.

FADE OUT.

THE END